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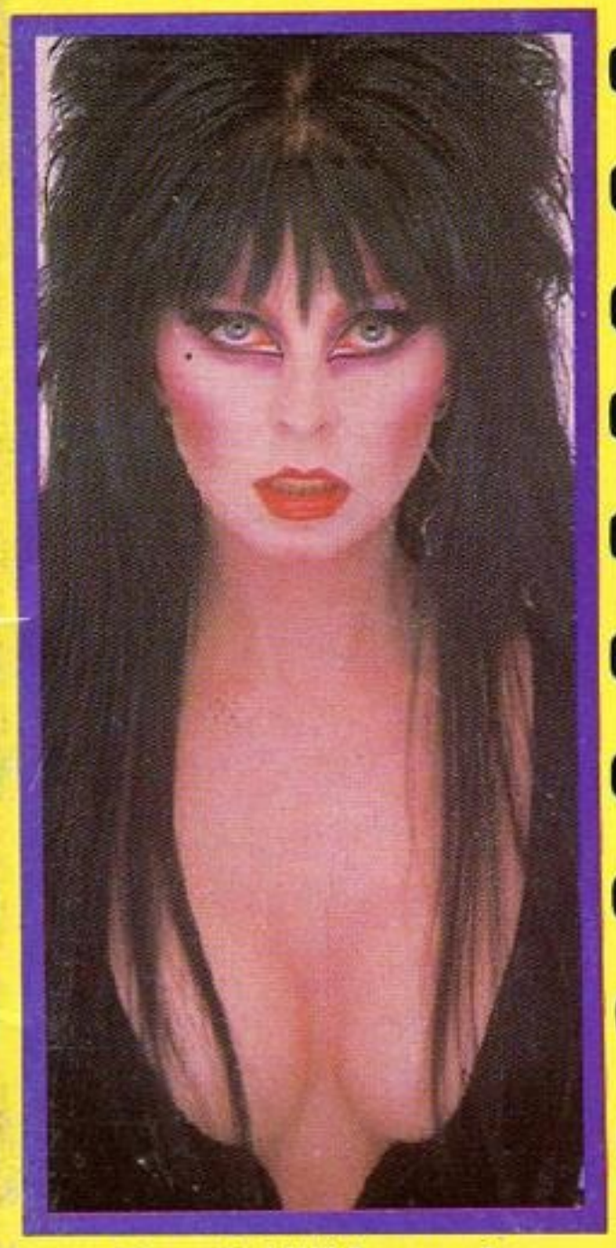

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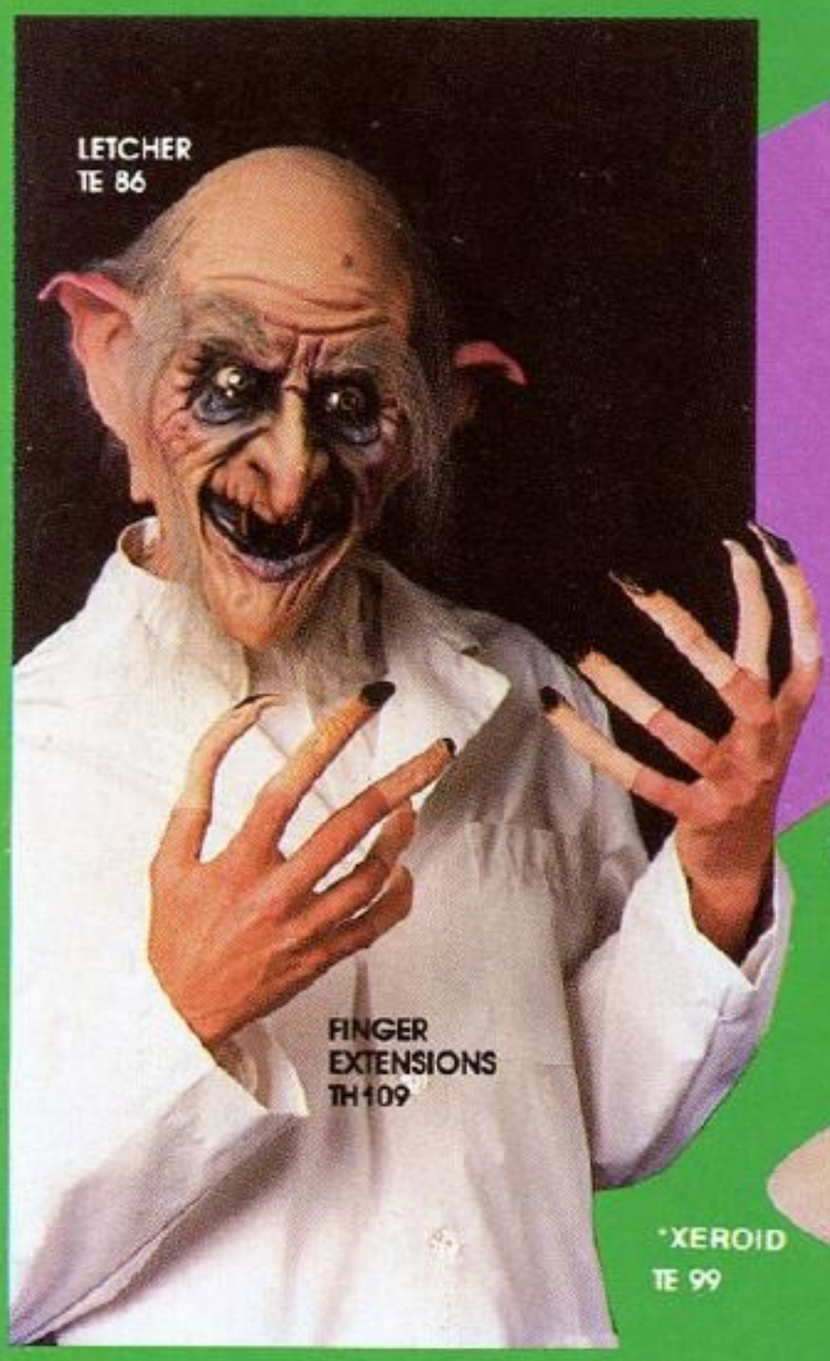

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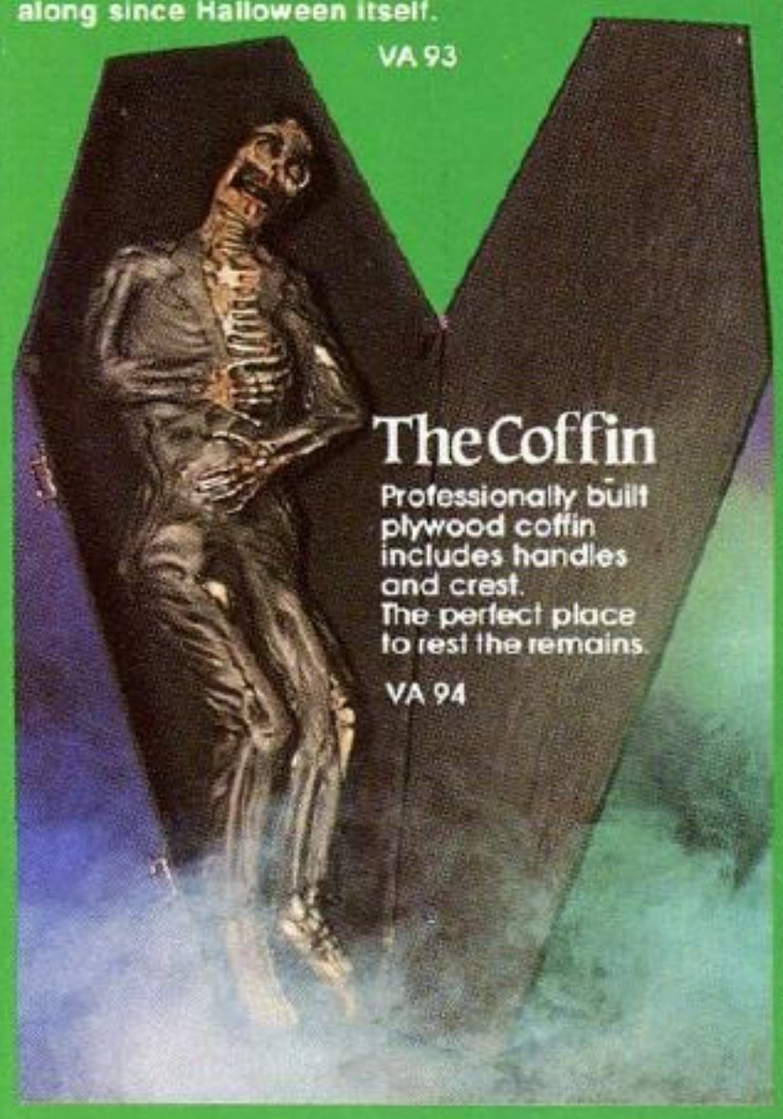

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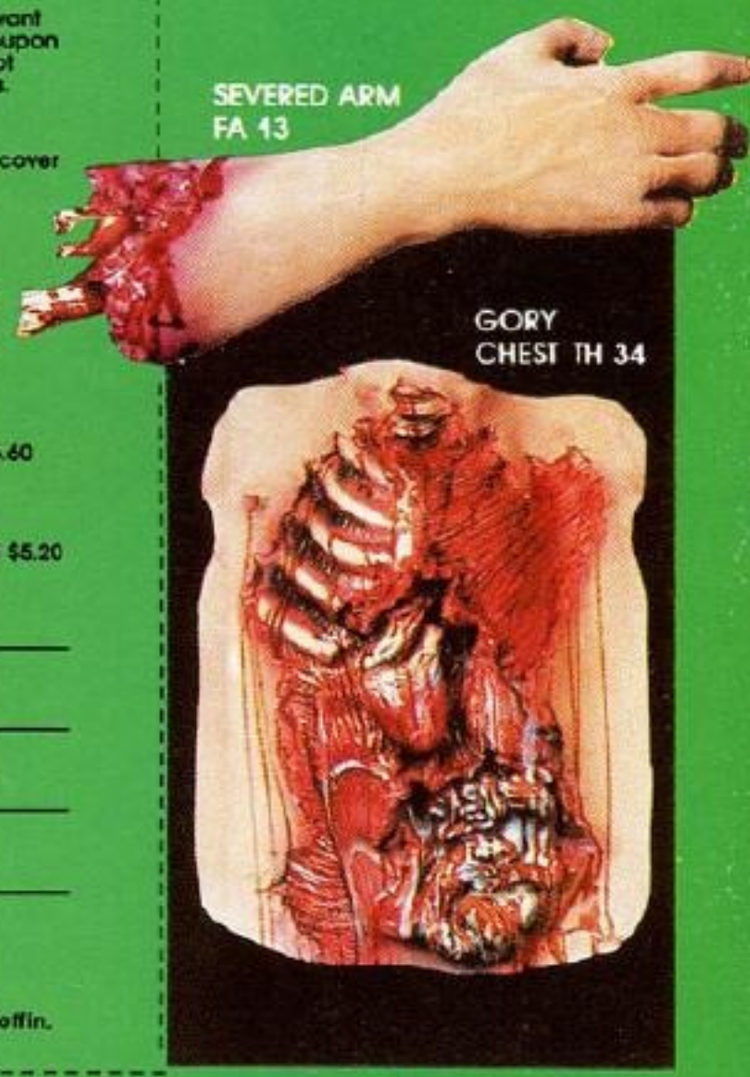

*XEROID Sculptured by Special Effects Artist, Steve Johnson. *THANATOID ©Bill Malone Productions

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September 1988

GUTS

14 NUNS ON SKATES *Does Donald G. Jackson, the man behind "The Demon Lover" and now "Roller Blade Warriors," set out to make dumb movies on purpose?*

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Dedicated to Melinda Mullen.

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ELEGY

Way to go, Rick!

My Date with Oscar

What could possibly top April's FANGORIA *Weekend of Horrors* in LA? What other exciting, thrill-packed surprises did my third Smogtown adventure hold? No less than a backstage ticket to the Oscars, buddy.

It took months of effort—begging, pleading, praying—until my lobbying of the Academy Awards public relations firm paid off with a backstage pass to the world of glitter and trash. And less than 12 hours after the convention's close, I was running around again like a June groom. Rewind. Step 1: Jump in my new tuxedo. Step 2: Gas up the rental car with the faulty air conditioning. Step 3: Avoid freeway snipers and make it to seedy downtown LA's Shrine Auditorium, the affair's site. Steps 4-5: Press through the throngs of rabid fans and sightseers and head to the crowded press tent to make small talk with wildly-accented Europeans, the incredibly expanding Roger Ebert and the odiously smug NY deejay Howard Stern.

The show begins with the usual insufferable musical numbers, stale toilet jokes from Chevy Chase and long commercial breaks. The winners (Sean Connery, Cher, Michael Douglas, et al) trot on down to our tent with gleams in their eyes, and field questions from dingbat gossip columnists on the order of, "Is it true Joan Collins won't be at your party tonight?" Winners with unpronounceable last names deliver endless speeches for technical awards. The glamour begins to fade . . . What *am* I doing here? Then Rick Baker proudly pockets his second Oscar (for his amazing *Harry and the Hendersons* creation) to make this April 11th evening truly worthwhile.

The three hours-plus show ends, and I scramble to the auditorium's lobby. Hey, it's Fango Con—Part 2! On the left, Stan Winston, a nominee for *Predator*, mingles with well-wishers. To the right, Kolchak himself, Darren McGavin, stops for small talk. When I press him about *Dead Heat*, a feeling of nausea overtakes him and he lurches for the men's room. I finally catch up with my girlfriend, Marguerite, and good buddy Ed Martin of Vestron Pictures. Suddenly, an enormous shadow looms over us. Why, it's all seven foot, two inches of *Predator/Harry* actor Kevin Peter Hall, rushing to deliver Rick Baker a big bear hug.

"What are you doing here?" Baker, who already took the top honors on 1981's *American Werewolf*, asks me bewilderedly. At this stage in his amazing career, Baker seems poised to ascend the throne of the Dean of Makeup Artists, now held by his mentor Dick Smith. (His knockout work on *Coming to America*, in which he transforms Eddie Murphy into an elderly white man, should nab him his third Oscar. Oh, yeah, now he's only gonna do boring historical dramas, right? No way. Baker just signed to do the FX job on Joe Dante's *Gremlins 2*!)

The lobby lights go up as security hustles the hangers-on out the door. Somehow, in all the excitement, Marguerite forgets to snap a photo of me posed in front of the giant Oscar statues. Dang, we'll have to try again next year.

—Anthony Timpone, Editor

The Postal Zone

Photo: Michael Ansell

The good and the bad on *The New Blood*.

Bad "Blood"

...Hey guys, it was Friday, May 13, and I went anxiously to see the seventh in the *Friday the 13th* saga. Well, what a disappointment! It was awful. I read your article on *Part VII* and I was excited to see this one, especially because of the inventive killings. Kane Hodder mentioned that there was a fisherman that gets killed by Jason. Sorry folks, it's not in the movie. Along with that missing scene, all of the FX seemed to be edited out. The Bushmaster 5000 scene, the "Cootchie-face" bit and the head-crunching kill are all prime examples. Did the censors suddenly become more strict? And what a hokey ending! The only positive marks I have for *Part VII* are Kane Hodder and the "new Jason" look. Guess what, folks? John Buechler strikes again!

Jason Barnett
18 Patterson Avenue
Menlo Park, CA 94025

...I just got back from *Friday the 13th, Part VII: The New Blood* and can't help but wonder: Where was the blood?! The movie was as violent as a *Disney Sunday Movie*. Almost none of the killings were actually shown, and most were downright boring.

If the ratings board want to be morons, let 'em. This isn't Russia. Release the movie unrated. The *Friday the 13th* series has already established its name, so the film will do well financially even without a rating. Maybe it would catch on, and splatter movies could be splatter movies again.

One other thing: The ending was STUPID. Are we supposed to think they left Tina's dad's corpse floating around in the lake for over a decade? Make *Part VIII* the sickest, rudest one yet. Stop turning Jason into a Care Bear! Make the next one unrated or don't make it at all. Gag me with a Smurf! Aaaaaargh!

Mitch Davis
Montreal, Canada

Good "Blood"

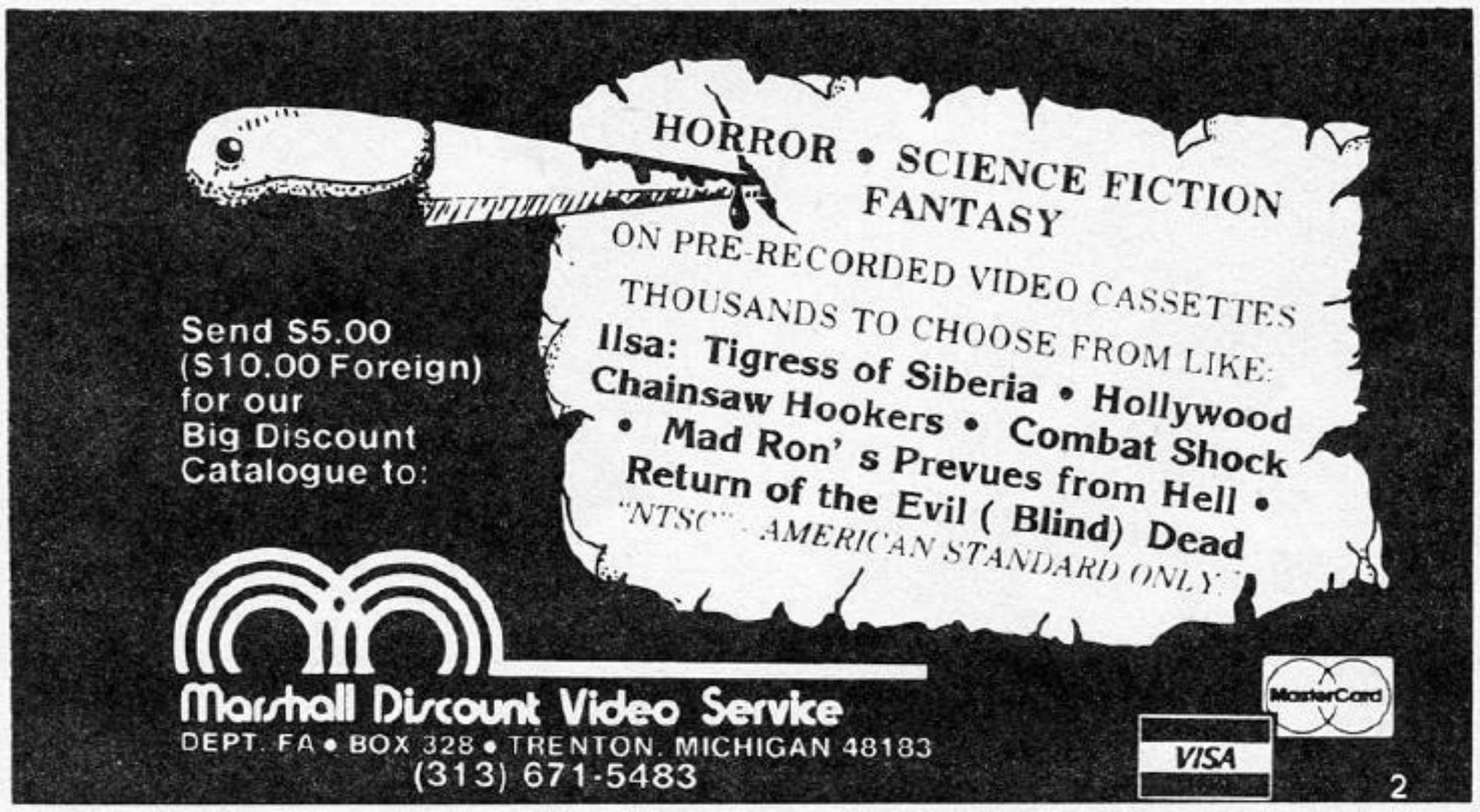
...Not since *The Final Chapter* have I witnessed a spectacle such as *The New Blood*. Tina Shepard simply kicks! Every moment she was on screen, she had my attention (which is more than I can say for Tommy, who was getting boring). Lar Park Lincoln is a very talented actress, and I hope she reprises her role in *Part VIII*. Her telepathic powers give the series a sense of the supernatural, which is fitting, since Jason is a zombie now. Speaking of Jason, Kane Hodder was magnificent. He was a powerful, towering, violent Jason, not the butt of jokes from *Part VI*. The new look is superb. (Years in the lake can do wonders for a zombie!)

The last 20 minutes of *Part VII* outdo anything the other six have done in their conclusions. Needless to say, the ending really blew me away! I recommend this sequel for all the Jason fans who thought he might be going stale, and to horror enthusiasts in general who don't even like slasher movies. *Friday the 13th, Part VII* is not a real slasher film. Jason is the new Frankenstein monster. My thanks to John Buechler for creating a truly "new beginning."

Darryl Peterson
835 Waterford Avenue
Winnipeg, Manitoba
Canada, R3T-1G6

...Congratulations are in order for everyone behind *Friday the 13th, Part VII: The New Blood* for giving us the best sequel since *Part 3*. The closing battle scene between Tina and Jason was exciting, much better than the usual routine chase scenes.

Most of the complaints I've been hearing are from people who say the telekinetic plot is ridiculous, but they're the same people who found Jason get-



ting revived by lightning in the last sequel totally believable. *The New Blood* saves the series from total silliness. I, for one, can't wait for *Part VIII*.

Tim Sanders
RR1, Box 53B
Council Bluffs, IA 51503

Bye-bye, "Werewolf"

. . . Why was *Werewolf* cancelled? Is there any chance it will come back via syndication or cable? Heck, just packaging some of the better episodes on video would be fine with me. Despite its faults, *Werewolf* was the best horror TV show since *The Night Stalker*. Is there anything the fans can do to bring it back?

T. Kevin Hill
32505 Endeavour Way
Union City, CA 94587

Anything is possible. Start with a letter campaign now, and maybe in 20 years you'll be seeing Werewolf: The Next Generation.

"Klowns" Krazy

. . . The Chiodo brothers' *Killer Klowns from Outer Space* has to be the best, most outrageous film since *Rocky Horror*. The bizarre humor of the Chiodos, hinted at in the *Critters* films, is fully set free here, from the clown designs to the wacky setups (especially the biker bar scene and the clown, the little girl and the mallet), all the way to the bad dialogue. Of course, what do you expect from a movie with a title like this?

Unfortunately, this gem bit the dust due to heavy competition from the latest *Friday the 13th* offering (which got away with using the same damn plot *again*!) and the arrival of the big summer movies. Hopefully, *Killer Klowns* will find an audience on the midnight movie circuit or success on video. Such fun cannot be missed!

Now, if I could only get people to stop making jokes about my home town. . .

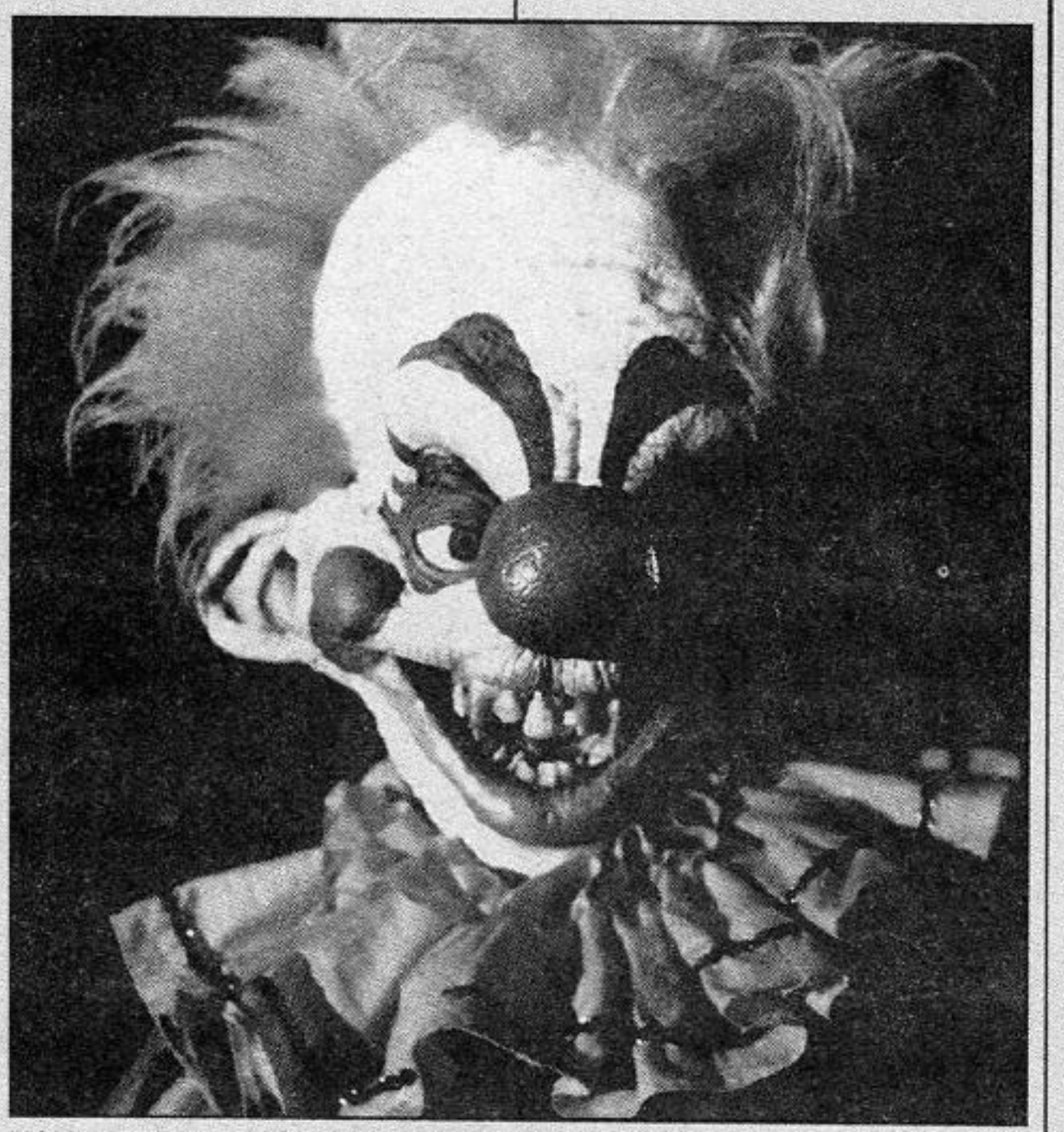
Tim Curtis
8417 Ackman Road
Crystal Lake, IL 60014

"Heat" Stroke

. . . *Dead Heat* was great! Treat Williams and Joe Piscopo were cool as humans and as zombies. The plot made sense and the action was ripping, riveting, and fast. And the FX were amazing! Steve Johnson has outdone himself again. Steve, along with assistant Kenny Myers, provided the audience with some grade-A FX. I especially will remember Lindsay Frost literally melting in blobs and glops with her flesh coming apart all over the place! First-time director Mark Goldblatt pulled no punches in the forward motion of *Dead Heat*. On a scale of one to 10, *Dead Heat* is a 15. I wonder if Terry Black can produce *Dead Heat 2*? Maybe Mortis and Bigelow can find a cure for their disease of death, zombieitis. March on, Terry Black!

Steven Flores
Houston, TX

New World toyed with the idea of a Dead Heat *follow-up, prior to the movie's dismal box-office opening. So don't count on a* Dead Heat 2.



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***Killer Klowns* wins 'em over in Illinois.**

Cyclops Scuffle

. . . As a longtime propagandist on behalf of Italian horror films, I took great exception to a comment in Dr. Cyclops' review of *Stagefright*: "Our Italian filmmaking friends are usually known for churning out senseless imitations of American hits."

If the Doc believes such imitation is a one-way street, he should take a good look at some of those American hits, e.g. *Friday the 13th* (a virtual remake of Mario Bava's *Antefatto/Twitch of the Death Nerve*), *ALIEN* (which contains scenes lifted straight out of Bava's *Planet of the Vampires*) and *Halloween* (which John Carpenter freely admits was heavily influenced by Dario Argento's early "giallo" films), not to mention *Dawn of the Dead* (co-written, co-produced and scored by Argento).

So Doc, to paraphrase the Good Book, take the log from your own Video Eye before you start criticizing splinters in the eyes of others.

John Martin
64 Amaury Road
Thornton, Liverpool
L23 9UZ, England

The good Doctor replies: Can it, birdbrain. For such a windy know-it-all, you sure have your facts askew. Argento neither co-wrote nor co-produced Dawn; *basically, he helped finance it (see Romero interview, BLOODY BEST #7). As far as my comments on Italian genre flicks, I stand by my unreprimanding observations. And don't make fun of my eye.*

"Phantasm" Phan

. . . Thanks, Fango, you've made my summer. Your coverage of *Phantasm II* was both informative and nostalgic. Being one of those hard-core fans that Mr. Bannister refers to in FANGORIA #75, I got a real sentimental twinge while reading your fabulous article.

The world has changed a lot during the nine years since I first saw the original *Phantasm* at a dusty Missouri drive-in. Flare-legged jeans are gone, disco is dead, and that dusty drive-in has been bulldozed to make room for a nursing home. But one thing has not changed: The Tall Man is still menacing the graveyards of America—and the ball is back!

Jeffrey W. Jones
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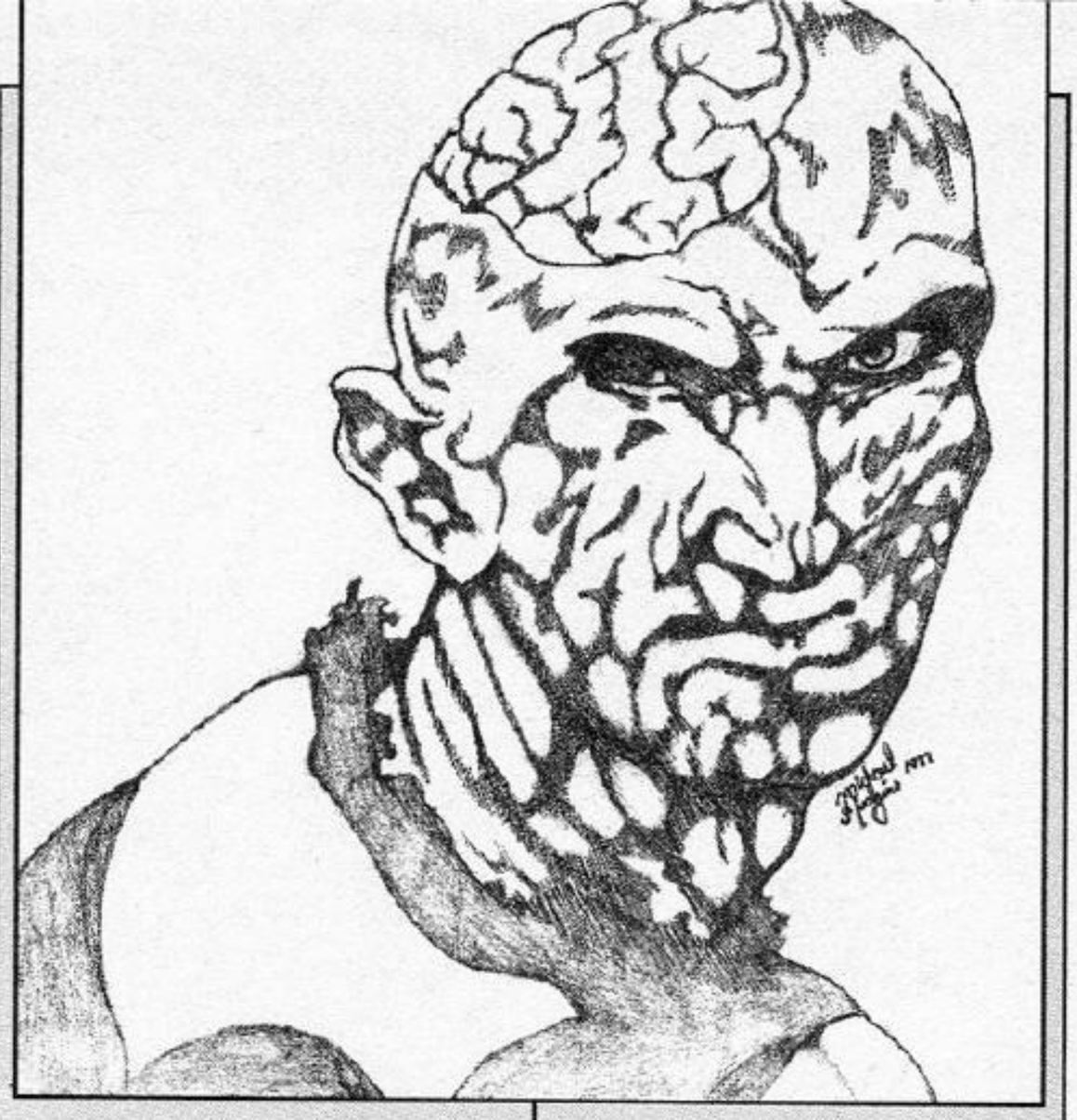

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MONSTER INVASION

Compiled by ANTHONY TIMPONE

The FANGORIA Fright File of up-to-the-minute newsbreaks and other horrible happenings!

IV Photos: Galaxy Releasing Corp.

***Halloween IV*: The Shape of things to come.**

"HALLOWEEN IV": Crazed killers never die—they come back in sequels. Or, as in the case of the long-anticipated *Halloween IV: The Return of Michael Meyers*, in sequels to sequels.

"Why another one?" questions *Halloween IV* producer Paul Freeman. "It's simple: The *Halloween* films have been a successful nightmare, so why not continue them?"

Halloween IV: The Return of Michael Meyers, directed by Dwight (*KGB*) Little from an Alan McElroy script, takes up 10 years after the final fiery sequence of the 1981 film *Halloween II*. Both Meyers (played this time by stuntman George Wilbur) and Dr. Loomis (Donald Pleasence) survived the hospital explosion, but with extensive burns. Meyers, who has spent the past decade in a coma in a federal facility, comes back to conscious life en route to a state institution, escapes and returns to Haddonfield, Illinois. The Shape's mission? To have his bloody way with Jamie (Danielle Harris), the daughter of the now-deceased Laurie, as well as with Rachel (Ellie Cornell), the teen daughter of her adopted family.

Halloween IV, filmed in 34 days in Salt Lake City, Utah, features the makeup FX work of Ken (*The Boogens*) Horn and the special FX work of Larry Fioritto. The budget is $3.5 million. Freeman, whose previous genre credits include *Night Gallery*, claims that *Halloween IV*, unlike the numerous slasher imitators that followed the first groundbreaking *Halloween*, will be relatively splatter free.

"We've got a couple of rather graphic on-camera kills, but most of the real gore stuff will be discovered after the fact. I wouldn't say we've got a humongous body count, but hard-core Michael Meyers fans won't be disappointed," Freeman promises.

Nor will they be disappointed by the fact that horror film veteran Donald Pleasence, who most recently graced John Carpenter's *Prince of Darkness*, once again hops on board as the crusading, if slightly bent, Dr. Loomis.

"I was asked, I was free," quips Pleasence to explain his third *Halloween* outing. "Besides, it would be rather difficult to do another *Halloween* movie without me."

Pleasence judges that the audience should not look for any major changes in his character. "He's still the man with the obsession," the veteran actor assures. "He's just madder, that's all. Otherwise, Loomis is still the same character."

Freeman claims that, with the exception of John Carpenter's haunting musical score making a cameo, neither Carpenter nor Debra Hill (the creators of the *Halloween* characters) had any creative input into the doings on *Halloween IV*.

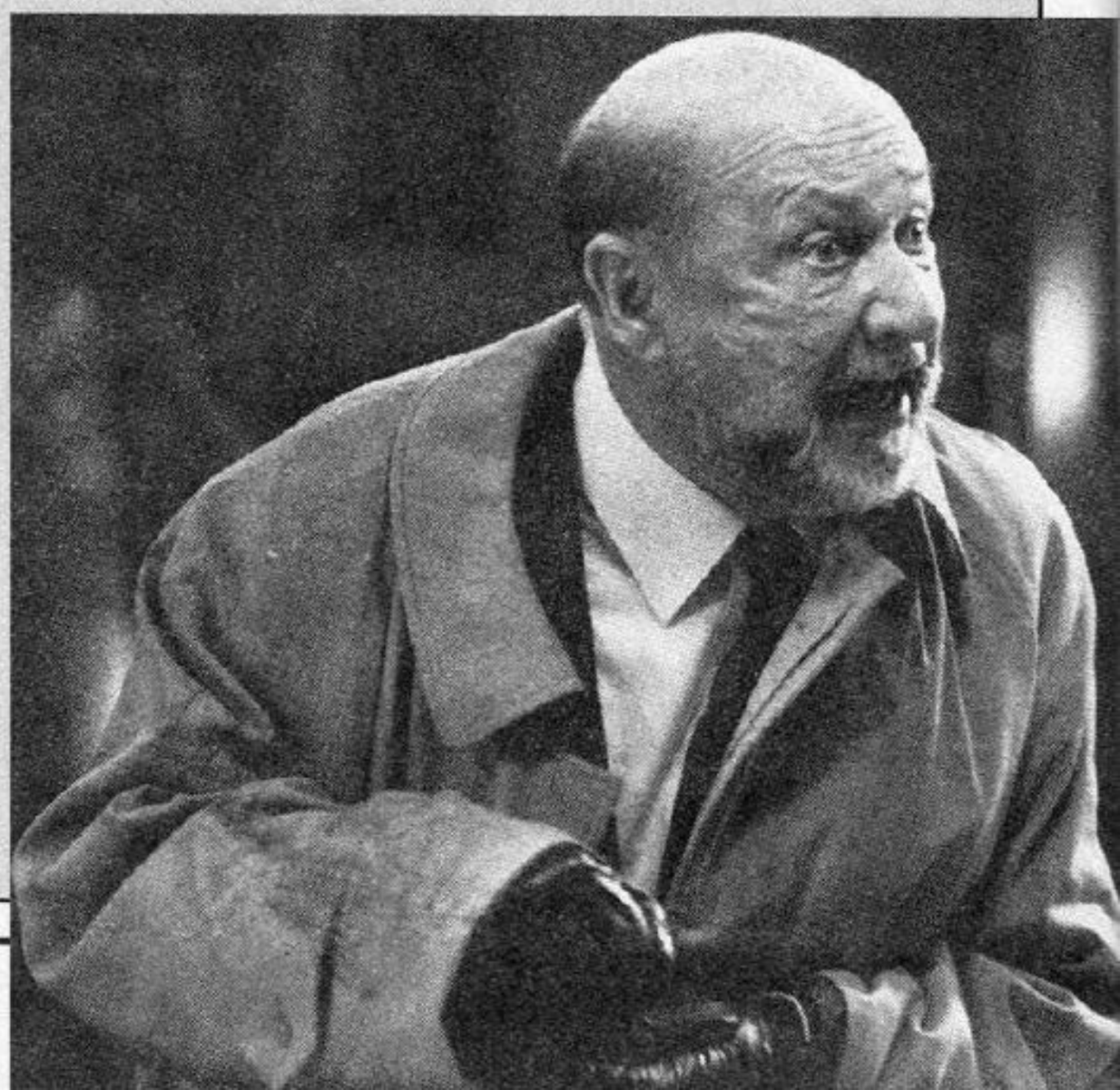
The producer feels that the script's quality will capture the devoted *Halloween* audience, including those who felt betrayed by the emergence of the Shape-less entry *Halloween III: The Season of the Witch*.

"What we've got is a solid horror suspense film with a real surprise ending," Freeman reports. "And it is an ending that does not preclude us from doing more *Halloween* films down the road."

Gee, that's a surprise, huh? *Halloween IV: The Return of Michael Meyers* is scheduled for an early October '88 release.

—*Marc Shapiro*

Displaying minimal scar tissue from his last round with the Shape, Dr. Loomis (Donald Pleasence) tries to stop *The Return of Michael Meyers*.



KING OF CANADA: The U.S. has Stephen King. Britain's got Clive Barker. What does Canada have—snow? Acid rain? Wayne Gretsky? Sure, but lately the Great White North has also acquired its very own best-selling horror writer. The name is Michael Slade, but it's actually three people: Vancouver criminal lawyers John Banks and Jay Clarke, and Clarke's wife Lee. Together, they've just released their second novel, *Ghoul*, a horrific tale of murder and heavy metal that is, according to terror master Robert Bloch, a "total wipeout." To put it bluntly, *Ghoul* is not a book for wimps.

Photo: Neil Lucente/North Star News

Canada takes a stab at the horror fiction market with the efforts of Michael Slade, the combined byline of (left to right) Jay Clarke, John Banks & Lee Clarke.

"What we've seen recently, with Clive Barker and with Slade and with several other writers," Jay Clarke feels, "is a stronger movement into the taboo area, simply because there is a contract with the reader which says: 'Fine, you're buying this as a horror book, you buy it in good faith. Don't expect me to give it to you watered down, with a guarantee that it won't scare you too much. You want to be horrified? I'll horrify ya. And any time you want to get off the train, just close the book.' "

Over half a million readers took a scary ride on the first Slade novel, *Headhunter*, a detective/thriller/horror book that became one of the best-selling novels ever written in Vancouver, second only to James Clavell's *Tai-Pan*. *Headhunter* was co-written by Banks, Jay Clarke, and yet another Vancouver lawyer, Richard Covell, but Covell dropped out of the Slade configuration before the *Ghoul* project was started, and Lee Clarke stepped in. She says that being a member of the fairer sex doesn't make her any less able to scare people than the other Slade-ists.

"People ask me, 'What's a woman doing writing a book as horrific as *Ghoul*?" she laughs. "For me, that's a sexist question. It seems to imply that a woman should write about 'Is the house haunted?' or 'Where are the children?' A woman can write about all-out horror every bit as well as a man."

Slade's three-way writing process works something like this: Jay Clarke and Banks spend a lot of time sharing story ideas, Clarke usually coming up with the main one. Banks then goes away and charts the characters and the scenes. After some more talk, Clarke bashes out a few pages, which all three confer over. When a certain section has been set out to everyone's satisfaction, Lee Clarke adds the finishing touches. The trio's motto is "Slade Never Sleeps," because while one of them might be out buying groceries, another will be jotting down ideas for an important scene.

A die-hard fan of hard rock/heavy metal, Jay Clarke made horror rock one of the themes of *Ghoul*, naming various chapters after such bands as Twisted Sister, Iron Maiden and Grim Reaper. The look of the murderous title character in the book is fashioned after that of the king of nasty rock himself, Alice Cooper.

Currently, there are plans to film *Headhunter* in Vancouver this fall, from a screenplay by John (*The Grey Fox*) Hunter. The film rights to *Ghoul* have recently been purchased as well. "*Headhunter* will be filmed by British and Canadian producers," explains Banks, "whereas *Ghoul* has been acquired by Americans based in Hollywood. I'll be fascinated to see who understands Slade the most, and who makes the better movie."

And what about Michael Slade as Canada's answer to Stephen King? "That's not the question," says Jay Clarke. "Stephen King captures the essence of American horror, just as Clive Barker hits the center of British fright dead-on. Does Michael Slade capture the heart of Canadian terror? *That's* the question. And I'd like to think so."

—*Steve Newton*

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THE TERROR TELETYPE: Up in the Great White North, production began in May on *Watchers*, an adaptation of Dean Koontz' bestselling thriller. The story involves the pursuit of two genetically-altered creatures—one good, one evil—and a boy and his mom who get mixed up in their squabbles. Corey (*Lost Boys*) Haim and Michael Ironside star in this fall release. Freddy makeup originator David Miller tackles the monster FX. John Hess directs. . .Look for new zombie mayhem in *Night Life*, the story of four wacky zombie teens and the trouble they get into. Scott (*Critters*) Grimes and John Astin topline the cast of this independent, with FX by Craig Reardon. . .At last April's Fango *Weekend*, Anthony Perkins told fans not to rule out a *Psycho IV*, and Tobe Hooper hinted that a *Texas Chainsaw 3* may be in his future. Don't count out *Gremlins 2* or *Ghostbusters 2*, either. . .Following in John Carpenter's footsteps, Wes Craven signed a two-picture deal with Alive Films. He promises to come up with a new horror character to rival Freddy. . .Christopher Lee went over to Holland to appear in *Murder Story*. . .From New Zealand comes *Bad Taste*, a riotously gory alien invasion movie written and directed by Peter Jackson. . .September openings include *Hellbound: Hellraiser II*, *Mr. Christmas Dinner*, *Twins* and *Waxwork*. October lineup: *Halloween IV*, *Haunted Summer*, *They Live*, *Lair of the White Worm*, *Pumpkinhead* and *The Dream Demon*.

"DEATH RATTLE": A giant cosmic slug named Zulthu leaves a trail of death and pure silver in its wake. A road kill turns the tables on its killers. A small town softball game is played against Satan himself. Two men stumble onto a sinister bowling alley in the dead of night. An artist draws a comic-book story of himself on a murderous rampage.

What is this—a Tobe Hooper fever dream? The lost season of *Twilight Zone*? *Creepshow 3*?

No. It's a comic book. All of those stories have appeared in Kitchen Sink Press' *Death Rattle*, whose 17 issues to date have featured such top names in the field as Steve (*Swamp Thing*) Bissette, Mike (*Nexus*) Baron, Frank Frazetta and Al Williamson, as well as famed underground artists Jaxon, Rand Holmes and Richard Corben, all turned loose on some of the grisliest and most off-trail horror stories ever seen in the comic book format. *Death Rattle* even sports an occasional text-and-photos feature, along the lines of "Ed Gein and the Left Hand of God" (*Death Rattle #7*) by editor Dave Schreiner, an in-depth study of the real-life man who inspired the films *Psycho*, *Texas Chainsaw Massacre* and *Deranged*.

Both Schreiner and publisher Denis Kitchen grew up and still live in Wisconsin, the Ed Gein state (now *there*'s something to put on a souvenir ashtray), and they remember well the headlines and playground jokes that followed the discovery of all those body parts in Gein's house. Another episode from Kitchen's youth involves some relatives who had "a whole closetful" of comic books.

"I'd sequester myself in there all afternoon, and I'd always pull out the horror comics; they were my first choice," Kitchen recalls. "I was somehow drawn to these creepy ones, and I can still remember having nightmares about them that I actually enjoyed. They made me come back for more. That had to be the real basis for wanting to do a horror comic series of my own, knowing that it would have a chilling effect on the reader. Let's face it, we're in the entertainment biz, and you either make 'em laugh, make 'em cry, or scare 'em."

Kitchen has been doing all three since his hippie days in the late '60s, when Kitchen Sink Press first saw life as an underground comix outfit. Twenty years later, Kitchen Sink is still refreshingly eclectic, publishing underground comics like *Bizarre Sex* and *Snarf* as well as *Steve Canyon* and *The Spirit*, two ends of the very wide Kitchen Sink publishing spectrum.

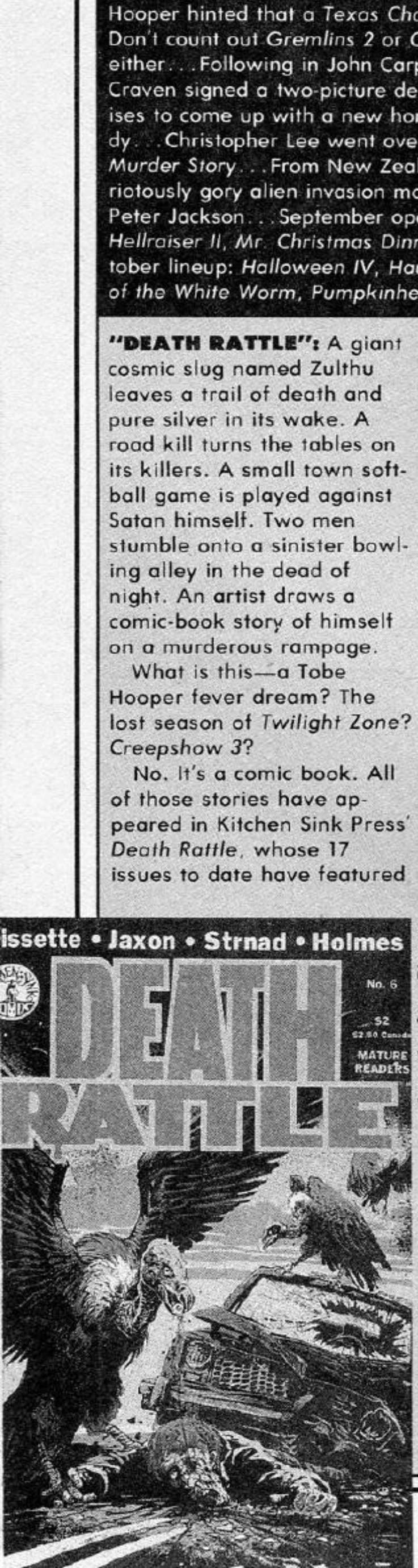
Death Rattle began in 1972, during the heyday of the undergrounds, but died after three issues. "I sensed it wasn't going anywhere fast, so I let it go and went on to other things," explains Kitchen. "But then, years later, I wanted to get an anthology book going. It's always been one of the toughest things to sell in the marketplace, but I personally enjoy them, and they're a great place to showcase new talent. If you can take somebody new and frame them with, let's say, Rand Holmes and Jack Jackson [Jaxon], people are going to buy the book anyway, and they'll be forced to look at somebody new, somebody they will hopefully like."

Death Rattle started on its current incarnation in 1985, first as a color book, then as a black-and-white with color covers. Even in the short time that passed since *Death Rattle*'s second coming, many horror comics have cropped up, only to expire in the face of reader apathy. *Death Rattle* itself, Kitchen admits, gets a little wobbly from time to time.

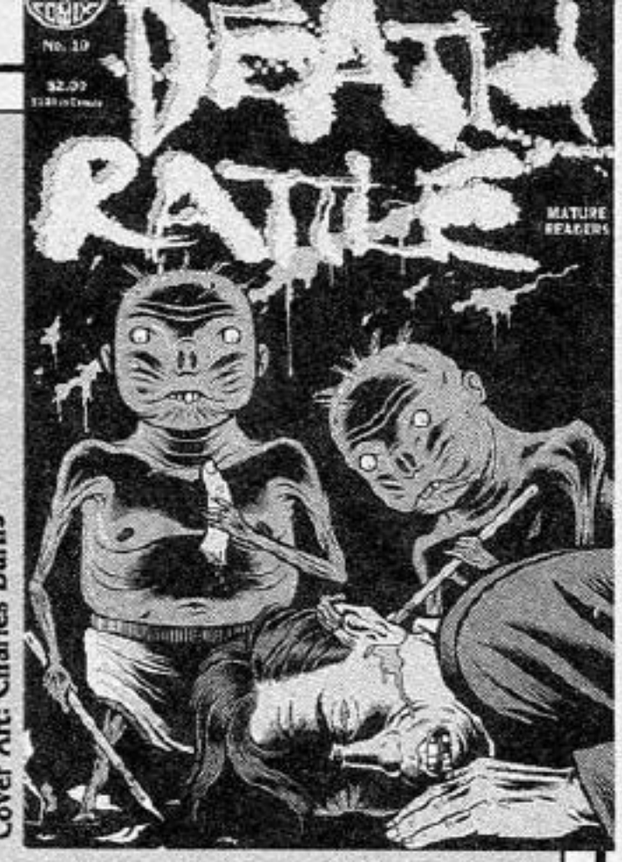
"The marketplace has just never been supportive. Obviously, FANGORIA is touching on an existing marketplace, but comic books have never been able to tap it successfully. Also, because of the kind of business they're doing, Marvel and DC can keep their cost per unit down to the extent that they can still have a 75¢ or $1 comic. Try as we may, we cannot compete at that level. There are certainly discriminating consumers who say, 'This book costs twice as much, but it's twice as good, so I have no problem.' But there are many others who look superficially at the price and say, 'I'm not paying two bucks for a comic when I can get one for half that.'"

Death Rattle sells for $2 an issue at comic book specialty shops. It carries a "Mature Audiences" disclaimer on the cover, which Kitchen says has kept the book out of censorship trouble. A free catalog of Kitchen Sink comics can be gotten by writing Kitchen Sink Press, 2 Swamp Road, Princeton, WI 54968.

—*John Wooley*



Cover Art: Steve Bissette



Cover Art: Charles Burns

Between his silver screen assault this summer and his fall TV series, Freddy also plans on visiting Eternity Comics' *Fright* (on sale this month).

Art: Madman/Scott Hanna

Lukas Haas witnesses another murder in the largely unseen but critically praised *Lady in White*.

Photo: New Century/Vista

How this big hairy guy managed to elude theatergoers remains uncertain, but *Cellar Dweller* can finally be found on video.

VIDEO CHOPPING LIST

CURRENTLY AVAILABLE

☐ **BAD GIRLS DORMITORY (ACTIVE; 1985):** "Where every good girl goes bad." This frenzied bloodbath claims five (count 'em) shower scenes as one of its selling points. Director Tim (*Breeders*) Kincaid's premiere outing.

☐ **BIRD WITH THE CRYSTAL PLUMAGE (UNITED; 1970):** The enigmatic Dario Argento's first directorial effort involves an American investigating bizarre multiple murders. Rerelease can now be yours for $19.95.

☐ **DON'T PANIC (MOGUL; 1988):** Mogul video says, "Forget Freddy and Jason." Yeah, right. A couple of kids unwittingly unleash satanic powers to wreak an "orgy of devastation" upon good ol' terra firma.

☐ **HOUSE OF DEATH (VIRGIN VISION; 1981):** Is there a deranged, maniacal mass murderer in the house? Only his best friend the machete knows for sure.

☐ **R.O.T.O.R. (IMPERIAL; 1987):** Direct-to-video *RoboCop*-type metal mutant goes cuckoo. Will he destroy the town he's supposed to save? What do you think?

AUGUST

☐ **INVASION EARTH: THE ALIENS ARE HERE (NEW WORLD; 1987):** Direct-to-video comedy about aliens taking over kids' minds at a monster movie marathon. FX by Dennis (*ALIENS*) Skotak.

☐ **NOTHING UNDERNEATH (SONY; 1985):** Bob telepathically witnesses sis' murder and goes to Italy to get involved with sex and drugs and blood. Sony boasts it's reminiscent of *Psycho* and *Dressed to Kill*. With Donald Pleasence.

☐ **SCREAM, BLACULA, SCREAM! (ORION; 1973):** The African Count (William Marshall) vs. voodoo priestess Pam Grier. Not as good as *Blacula*.

☐ **VAMP (NEW WORLD; 1986):** Rerelease of those kinda cool, kinda now, kinda hip vampires led by Grace Jones at the After Dark club. They're accidentally discovered by college pranksters Chris Makepeace and Robert (*Nightmare 2*) Rusler and can now be nabbed for $19.95.

SEPTEMBER

☐ **BLOOD FEAST (NEW STAR; 1963):** Not only the first splatter movie, but the first movie to show people dying with their eyes open. This rereleased classic by "Godfather of gore" Herschell Gordon Lewis can be yours for a bargain $29.95.

☐ **CELLAR DWELLER (NEW WORLD; 1988):** FX guy John Buechler directed this homage to EC comics featuring comic strip gore sandwiched between live-action gross-outs by Fango #71's cover creature.

☐ **COLOR ME BLOOD RED (NEW STAR; 1965):** The third gore-a-thon by H.G. Lewis tells of a painter who discovers the secret of success—a special shade of red—thanks to the blood of his beautiful models. Rerelease is—egad!—$29.95

☐ **GHOULIES 2 (VESTRON; 1988):** Directed by Albert Band; John Buechler's little things are back, and they've got a music video with Blacky Lawless' W.A.S.P. Real lame.

☐ **GRUESOME TWOSOME (NEW STAR; 1968):** Rerelease of an obscure H.G. Lewis favorite about a mother and son scalping coeds to supply the family "human hair" wig business.

☐ **LADY IN WHITE (VIRGIN VISION; 1988):** Fresh from an unsuccessful theatrical run, Katherine Helmond scares Lukas (*Witness*) Haas while searching for her little ghost niece.

☐ **2000 MANIACS (NEW STAR; 1964):** This second Lewis bloodbath was banned in most of the country at the time of release. See the South take revenge on those pesky Yankees by dismemberment, overcooking, crushing, etc. Hear Lewis' musical score and witness Playmate Connie Mason for $29.95.

☐ **THE UNHOLY (VESTRON; 1988):** Yet another religious demon plays havoc with yet another church while testing the mettle of yet another priest. This one's got good art direction, surprise editing and some decent gore, with Bob Keen FX in the last scene. Otherwise, kinda bland.

☐ **WIZARD OF GORE (NEW STAR; 1970):** What's a few sawed-up women to H.G. Lewis? How about a spike through the head? Is it magic? Is it mesmerism? We don't know, we be hipmo-tized. So can you, for $39.95. (See BLOODY BEST #7).

—compiled by Larry Barsky

"Hmmmm. *Blood Feast* for only $29.95? Might as well own a copy now."

Photo: Copyright Epics International

ROLLERBLADE JACKSON

The man behind the legendary "The Demon Lover" throws his hand into the schlock arena—with all 10 fingers, count 'em.

By BILL WARREN

You wander into your video store, desperate for some science fiction or horror film. You need a genre fix, and it has to be something you haven't seen before. You're sweating now as your eyes skitter over the titles: *Critters, Close Encounters, Horror of Dracula, Friday the 13th, Roller Blade, The Mummy vs. the Curse of the—*

Nobody will call Ms. Kinmont "babe" again.

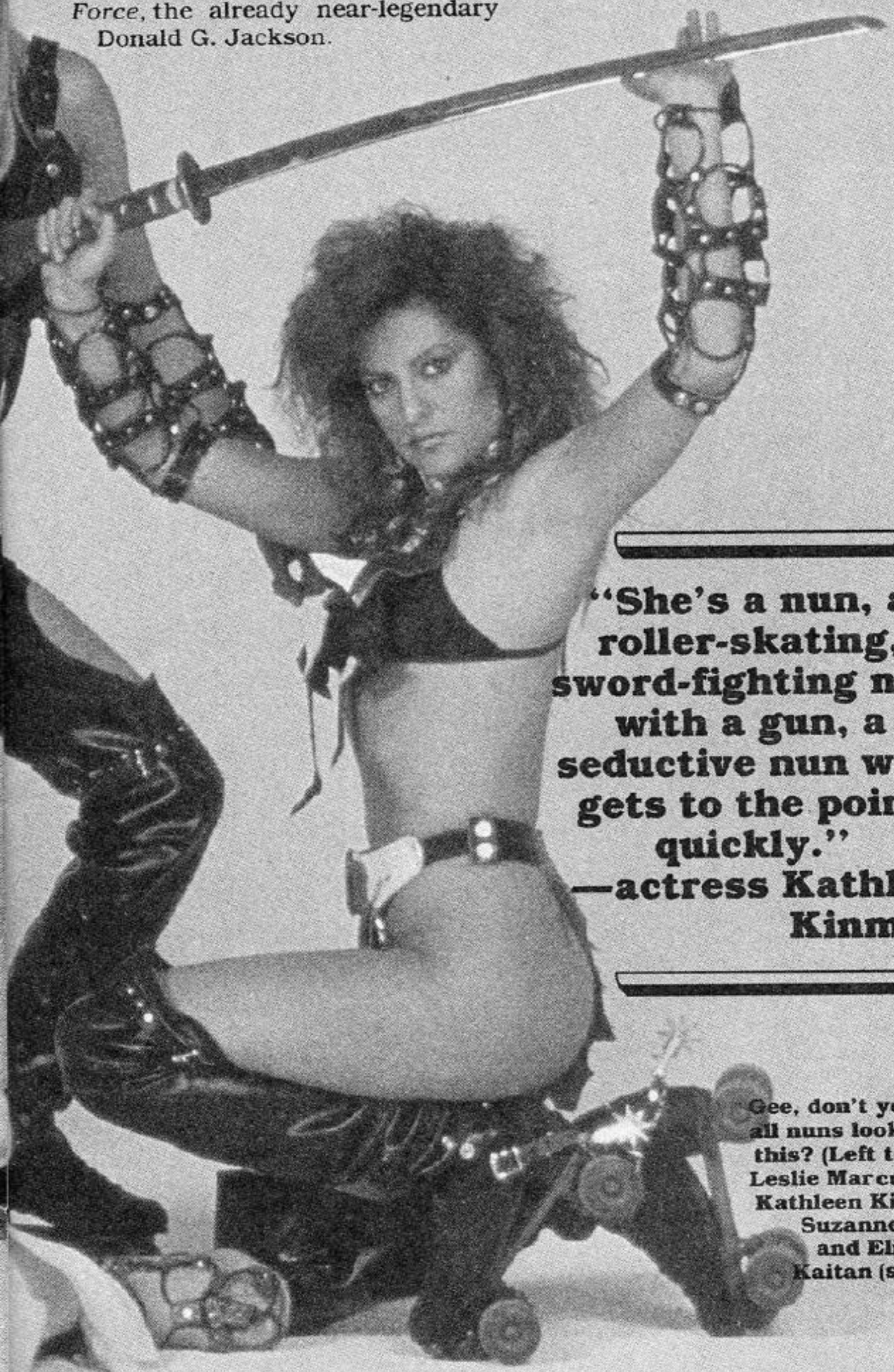
Hold it. Your eyes snap back. *Roller Blade*? What the heck is *Roller Blade*? It looks about right from the pictures on the box, and you haven't seen it, so that's good enough. You plunk down two bucks and hotfoot it home, snap on the TV and slam in the tape. You grab a can of soda and a bag of fried pork rinds. And you watch *Roller Blade*.

Two hours later, you watch the end credits, glassy-eyed. And then a pal calls and tells you, out of the blue, that they're making a sequel to *Roller Blade*.

And so they are. A *sequel* to the world's first post-apocalypse, roller-skating, miracle-healing, red-clad nun movie. And the same awesome—if bizarre—mind is behind *Roller Blade Warriors: Taken by Force*, the already near-legendary Donald G. Jackson.

Photos: Copyright 1988 Golden Circle Productions

They told Elizabeth Kaitan that mixed marriages never work out.



"She's a nun, a roller-skating, sword-fighting nun with a gun, a seductive nun who gets to the point quickly."
—actress Kathleen Kinmont

Gee, don't you wish all nuns looked like this? (Left to right) Leslie Marcuecella, Kathleen Kinmont, Suzanne Solari and Elizabeth Kaitan (seated).

The name causes something fuzzy to turn over in your mind. Donald G. Jackson. Hmm. Where do you know that name from? Wait a minute—he's that loon who shot off his hand to get insurance money in order to finance his mysterious, hard-to-locate first film, *The Demon Lover*, right?

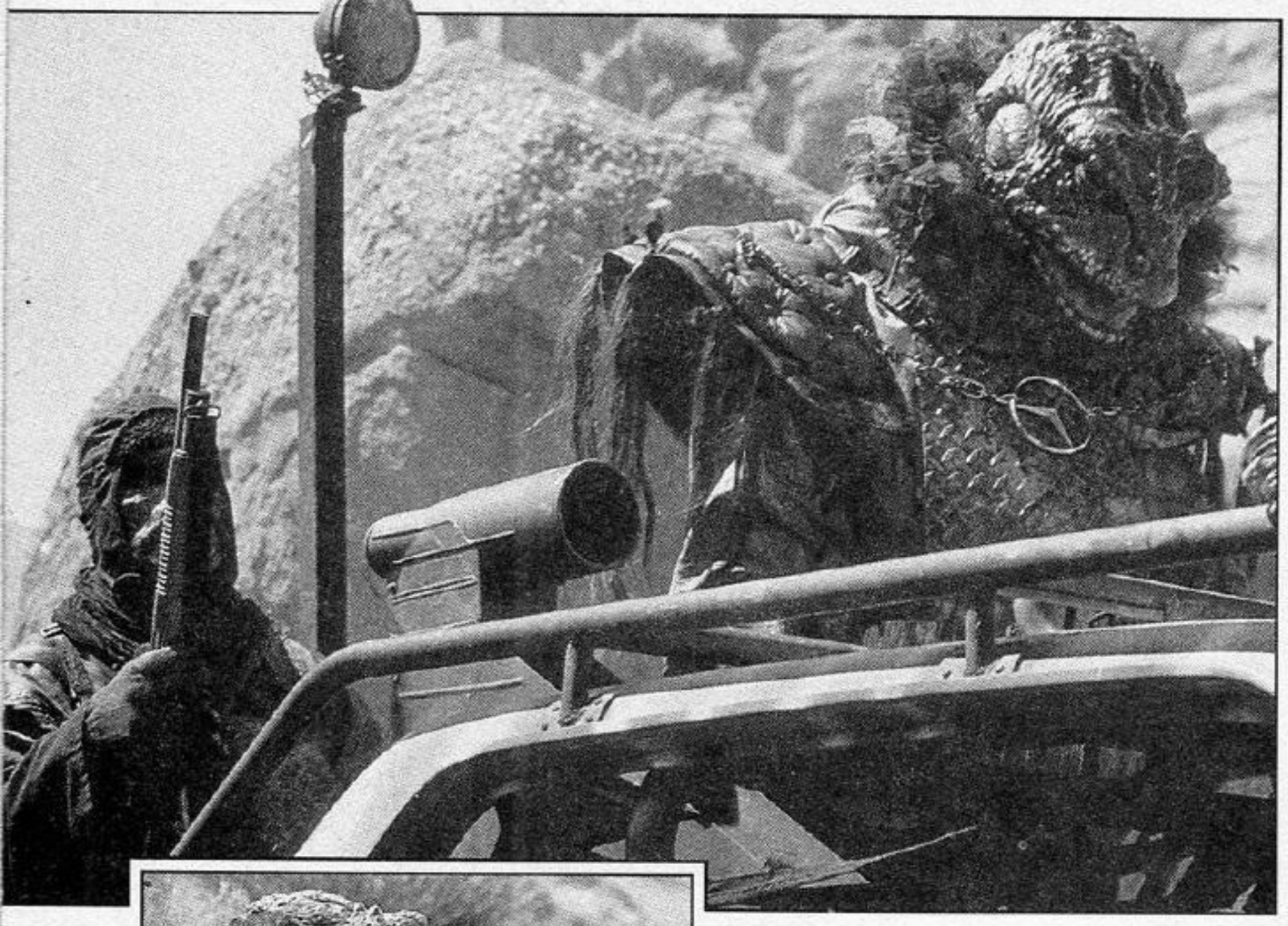
Wrong, says the cordial Jackson on the set of *Roller Blade Warriors*. The injury was to someone else's hand, and it was a bona fide accident, although the insurance money did help finance the movie. More on that later.

Since the first film was a direct-to-video release, *Roller Blade Warriors* has been written so that you don't have to see its predecessor in order to appreciate this one, intended for theatrical distribution. It's also a good deal more expensive (though on the day Fango visited the set, it was kind of hard to tell).

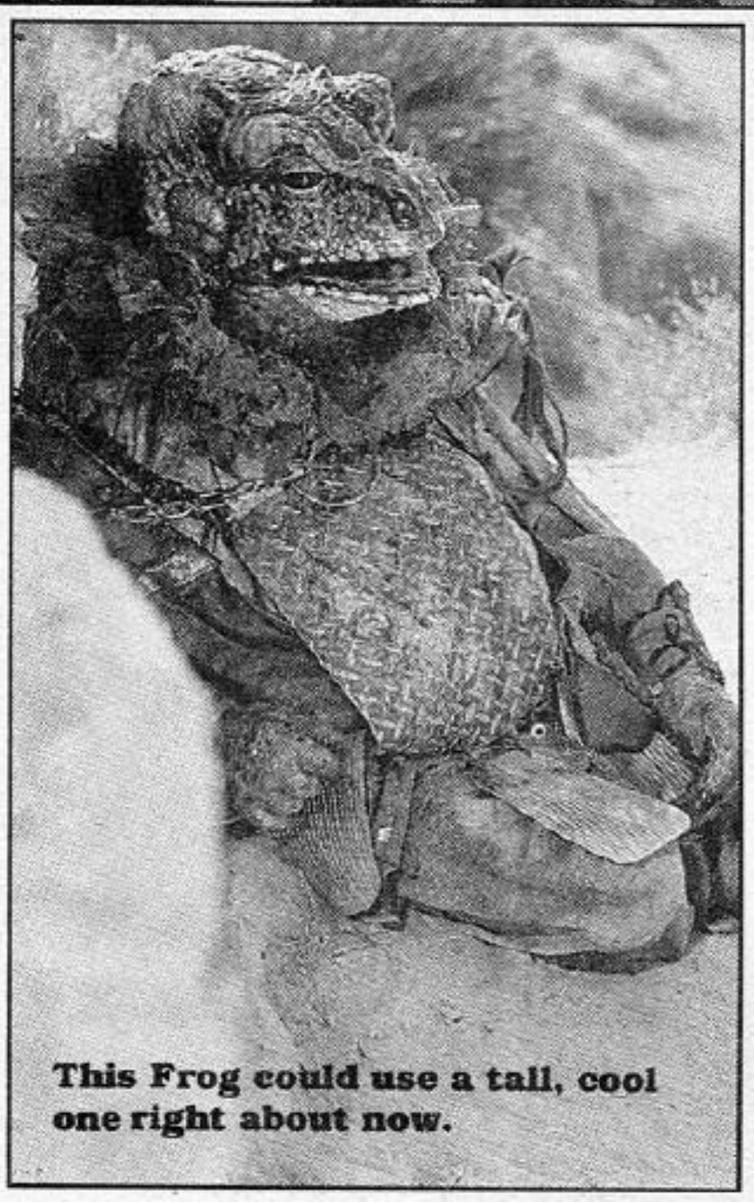
The stage was an echoing slab-sided metal shed on the concrete banks of the tiny, grassy Los Angeles River, not far from downtown. The set is a deliberately shoddy tavern, with a bar along one end and lots of freaky decorations on the wall. Jackson, who in addition to co-writing and directing is also photographing the film, shoots a scene in which heroine Kathleen Kinmont scornfully puts down a slimeball who's drooling with lust.

Before every take, a crewman steps in with a hissing pot and lays down a nimbus of fog to give texture to the visuals. Kinmont, one of the roller-skating nuns (though here dressed like Conan's sister), and the actor go through their lines several times before Jackson is satisfied and the crew breaks for lunch.

"The Cosmic Order of Roller Blade, at the mission run by Mother Speed, which is in the wasteland, is a sisterhood of female warriors," ex-



A warwagon rolls in Donald Jackson/R.J. Kizer's *Hell Comes to Frogtown*, a kind of *Planet of the Apes* with amphibians (makeup by Steve Wang).



This Frog could use a tail, cool one right about now.

plains Jackson. "Outside the mission, they're trying to rebuild society after the holocaust. They have sent for a psychic from another Roller Blade diocese far off to come and aid in their work.

"The psychic, Gretchen Hope [Elizabeth Kaitan], is escorted across the wasteland by Karin Crosse, and on the way Gretchen is kidnapped by some bad guys from a town called Abaddon, who are looking for new women to sacrifice to a monster who runs a nuclear reactor for them, which supplies power to their city. The monster's happy every time they feed him new flesh, and he keeps the power going to the city. Karin Crosse follows her trail into this city to rescue her.

"Mother Speed, who's the head nun of the Cosmic Order of Roller Blade, sees a vision that the psychic has been kidnapped," Jackson continues. "She sends Sharon Crosse and Valjean Crosse, from the first movie, in to provide support for Karen Crosse. Once they get into the city, Abaddon, the movie becomes a a spaghetti Western/samurai film."

It's a chilly January day in Los Angeles, and the inside of the metal shed, even with the lights illuminating the set, is teeth-chatteringly cold. There's not much lingering here; if people don't have immediate business on the set, they head outside into the thin but warmer sunshine. Fortunately for Kathleen Kinmont, who's wearing about enough leather to upholster a telephone, she also has a cloak, and, being the star, is under those warm lights a lot. She kibitzes briefly with grinning Michael Sonye, a co-star who calls Fango his favorite mag.

Kinmont is, to put it mildly, striking, with cheekbones a guy could happily impale himself upon, a perfectly athletic figure, and a funny, direct and honest delivery. Her mother, Abby Dalton, was a major TV star back in the 1960s (and appears in *Roller Blade Warriors* as Mother Speed). Kinmont is even more attractive than her mother, and has a lot of Dalton's straightforward, down-to-earth sexiness. She wants to be a star of action movies and certainly has the looks and physicality for it. (Dalton did this, too; she starred in Roger Corman's incredible *The Saga of the Viking Women and Their Voyage to the Waters of the Great Sea Serpent*.)

Karin Crosse, says Kinmont, is "real strong, real goal-oriented, true and respectful to her order." As if realizing she's starting to sound like she takes this whacky action spoof too seriously, Kinmont smiles and adds, "She's a nun, a roller-skating, sword-fighting nun with a gun, a seductive nun who gets to the point quickly."

Later the same day, a scene with Dalton—clad in red but confined, for purposes of the plot, to a wheelchair—is shot on a "limbo set" (a white backdrop makes the set seem to go on forever) dominated by stained glass-like zigzags and a colossal Happy Face. Dalton is still a striking woman, but the strangeness of the scene nears sheer surrealism.

Unlike most such heroines, Kinmont doesn't have a backup male lover/protector. Kinmont frowns, putting on a mock-serious demeanor. "There isn't anyone I really want to go home with," she deadpans. "I skate alone."

Every movie has a different story connected with how it happened to be made. Producer Jonathan S. Kaplan (no relation to the director of *Project X*) reveals that the story behind *Roller Blade Warriors* is standard Hollyweird. "Every one of the major people involved in this—the financier, the director, the exec in charge, me—is a client of the same lawyer, Bob Klein. So Bob said, 'Well, let's put it together.' "

Kaplan has had a long but intermittent association with genre films. Along with director John Carpenter and actor/writer Dan O'Bannon, he was involved in the cult classic *Dark Star*. He went on to work with Carpenter on several films after that, as well as with O'Bannon on *ALIEN*, and later graduated to *Phobia* and *The Final Terror*.

The budget for *Roller Blade Warriors* is, Kaplan admits, 'a good question. It began way under a million dollars, scheduled for about three weeks." The film's weirdness appeals to Kaplan. "In my experience, watching movies hour after hour when I was at USC and the thousands of movies I've seen since then, there's nothing like this picture. Not even the first one. I think this one more successfully bridges the gap between cultism and a general audience picture. It has more of the crossover elements, more of the story, more of the action, fewer in-jokes.

Michael Sonye, the distinguished writer of *Blood Diner*, demonstrates his accomplished acting skills by assaulting psychic Gretchen Hope.

"It's a very ambitious film," he goes on. "Lots of swordfights, lots of martial arts, some special effects. The Kaiser Steel Plant in Fontana used to be one of the world's centers for steelmaking. Gradually over the years, it became dilapidated to the point where management just gave up. There must be two, three square miles of building after building, abandoned, some of it totally dismantled, some of it partially dismantled. It's overwhelmingly red with rust. It's incredible, and it's basically there for the taking, anywhere from $800 to $1,000 a day to shoot there. Shhh! Don't tell anybody."

Jackson's filmmaking career started back in Michigan, with *The Demon Lover* nearing legendary status because of the rumor it was financed by, well, self-mutilation. The story of how this movie came to be made is long and involved, and not only would it make a movie itself, it *did*. Seen far more often than *The Demon Lover* is a sardonic, spiteful documentary called *"Demon Lover" Diary*.

"I was getting ready to shoot a low-budget film on my own, a little thing in 16mm called *The Adventures of Lincoln Green*, when I met Jerry Younkins, a comic book collector and a friend of Ted Nugent, who lived in Jackson, Michigan," Jackson clarifies. "I was selling my comic collection to get the money to finance *Lincoln Green*. Younkins came down to my house and bought all my comic books. He had two fingers missing from one of his hands, the result of a punch press accident at the factory where he worked. At the time I met him, he was waiting for his insurance money." Younkins intended to study screenwriting at USC, but the class was cancelled; he showed Jackson an interesting castle location locally, and together they wrote a script called *The Demon Lover*.

"We just wanted a modern version of *Night of the Living Dead* where a group of young people get killed one at a time," the director recalls. "This was before *Halloween* or *Friday the 13th*. So we wrote the script and started searching for financing. Jerry's insurance settlement was

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(Left to right) Leslie Marcuella, producer Jonathan Kaplan, Elizabeth Kaitan, Kathleen Kinmont, director Donald Jackson and Suzanne Solari. It must be real hard making movies today, huh?

about $10,000, so we went to New York to buy props." The work of cameraman Jeff Krinas had impressed Jackson, and in hiring him, he agreed to allow Krinas to do a behind-the-scenes "Making of" documentary on the film.

Desperate to start his movie, Jackson borrowed money on his car and his furniture to get $3,000 more, but was unware that Krinas had money from the American Film Institute to make his movie on the making of *Jackson's* movie. "It's really an assassination piece on me. They dropped out some of my voice, dubbed over it, commented on it, and they never showed any of the good things, just some of the crisis points," winces Jackson. "One of the biggest things wrong with their movie is at the end of it, when I fired them, they claimed I had Ted Nugent's gun and as they were driving off, we were shooting at them. What really happened was that somebody picked up some gravel and threw it at their car."

Jackson later began an authentic American wrestling/horror movie to be called *Ringside in Hell*, but financing fell through again. "I decided to turn it into a documentary about professional wrestling." By 1980, Jackson was very discouraged. However, at the end of that year, "Bob Skotak said that if I wanted a supportive environment, I should come to California. Roger Corman was getting ready to make *Galaxy of Terror*, and the Skotaks said I should come out and work on it." Because the FX work would last much longer than the live-action work, Jackson went into the FX business for Corman. "I met Jim Cameron there; I worked with him on *Terminator* and just recently again on a rock video for a band called Martini Ranch. I met Randy Frakes there, who wrote *Hell Comes to Frogtown* with me."

Hell Comes to Frogtown? Holy cats, what's *that*? First, Jackson says, a bit of background. When the FX job ended, Jackson, who had moved his family out from Michigan, was out of work. "I got a job with Graphic Film Corporation, shooting Omnimax movies, the world's largest film format. What I wanted to do was follow in the footsteps of my mentor, Fred Olen Ray, King of Schlock. I worked with Fred on *Scalps* and *Biohazard*.

"I decided to make my own *Scalps*-type movie, a 16mm project I could sell to video," he relates. "Started shooting something that was basically a girl with a straight razor on roller skates at Venice Beach, killing people at random. We started shooting this slasher movie at Venice, then went to Azusa to do some pickup shots. We were coming back, and Cliff Davison made a wrong turn. We encountered this mission, which looks like a little Catholic church. I wondered why these blades couldn't be used for good, for healing, instead of killing, and decided the only really good thing to do was futuristic rebel nuns on roller skates with knives that are used to heal people."

Not long before, when Cyndi Lauper's fun with wrestling helped revive interest in the sport, New World became anxious to find a wrestling movie. "I raised my hand and they said they'd make my film. They redubbed the music score and put it out very quickly, retitled *I Like to Hurt People*. Because that did so well, I was able to show them raw footage of the girls roller-skating." To Jackson's surprise and relief, Roy Cox at New World immediately advanced him enough money to finish *Roller Blade*, and the company distributed it on video.

"On the last day we were shooting *Roller Blade*, which was out back of this place here, I saw a sign painted on the wall: 'Frogtown.' Sam Mann, who played Waco in *Roller Blade*, was going to a party wearing a jock strap, a pair of boots and a raincoat. I thought, 'What if this guy was a marshal named Sam Hell, and he came to Frogtown, and we called it *Hell Comes to Frogtown*?' "

Because of the need to finish *Roller Blade*, Jackson forgot about this wondrous inspiration. But then another wrong turn brought him to an area that looked like "a post-nuke environment," and he and Randy Frakes quickly scripted *Hell Comes to Frogtown*. "I took it to New World Pictures and said I wanted to make another film. They read the script and said, 'OK, we'll give you $150,000.' It ended up costing $1.5 million. But when that budget went up, New World decided that since Don Jackson has only made a $70,000 video, he needs help." R.J. Kizer, who directed the American insert scenes for *Godzilla 1985*, was put on *Frogtown* as Jackson's co-director. New World reasoned that since Jackson's visual style was flamboyant and Kizer's conservative, they might work well together.

But what on seven green Earths is *Hell Comes to Frogtown* about? The area of Los Angeles known as Elysian Valley got its nickname "Frogtown" in the late 1940s when a flood sent thousands of frogs clambering out of the Los Angeles River and hopping through the streets of the community. That wouldn't even make a good cartoon. Jackson elucidates: "*Hell Comes to Frogtown* is like 'Mad Max meets Planet of the Apes'—only instead of apes, they're giant mutant frogs." Oh, right. Sure. Why didn't we think of that?

Jackson is very loyal to those who

(continued on page 64)

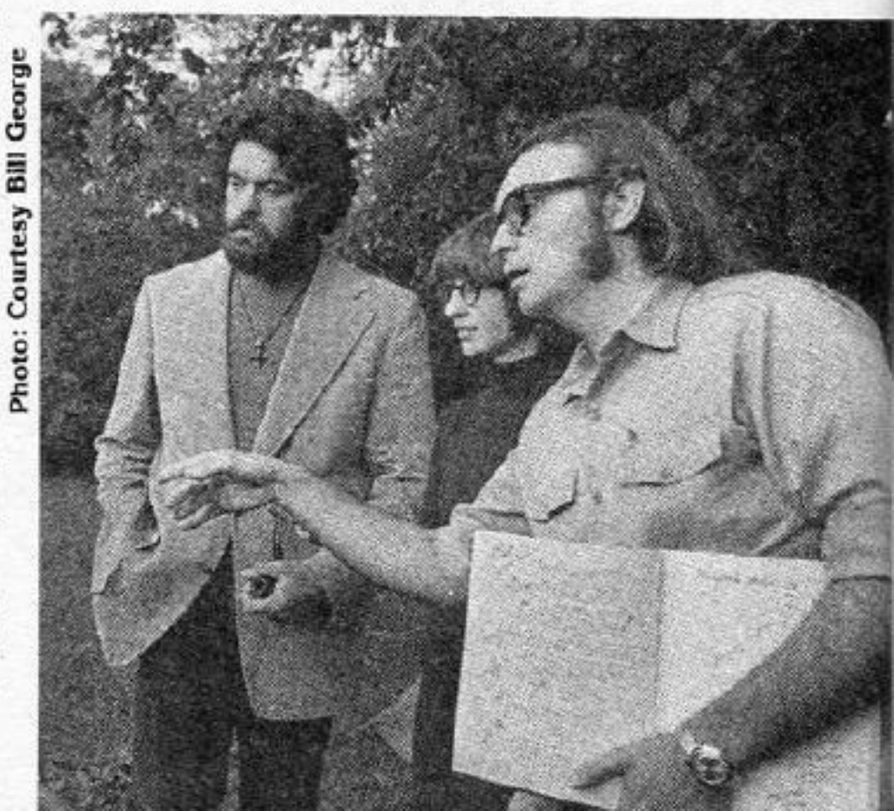


Photo: Courtesy Bill George

On the *Demon Lover* set, Jackson (right) proves to star Gunnar Hansen that he still owns all his fingers.

The maggot twins (Zeke and Dale) sample life's rich pageantry.

The mundane world of everyday life provides the backdrop for invasion by "pure evil."

THE KISS of DEATH

By PETER BLOCH-HANSEN

New terror arrives from up North with a Canadian tale of a demon that invades an everyday family's home.

Like, fer sure, this babe will be totally the talk of the mall when the escalator turns her into guacamole.

Montreal is built on an island. Towards the east end, a mundane-looking warehouse stands amid rows of others just like it, but this warehouse is ordinary only on the outside; inside, a malevolent presence weaves a sinister spell. A woman, to all appearances an especially beautiful fashion model but in reality the carrier of an ancient African demon, is working to destroy a family by killing the mother, seducing the father and stealing the very life from their lovely teenaged daughter.

This is the premise of *The Kiss* (formerly *The Host* and *Kissed*) one of five films to be produced under an agreement between Montreal's Astral Pictures and Tri-Star in Los Angeles. Executive producer Richard Lewis and director Pen Densham both move about the set as if possessed. On a shooting schedule of only seven weeks, there is much cinematic magic to be spun.

The vast darkened warehouse interior seems a perfect place for such sorcery. Huge shapes loom up on all sides, and only when the bold glare of a studio spotlight shines directly on them can they be recognized at all. They seem harmless enough,

Joanna Pacula learns the cutthroat truth of demon possession in *The Kiss*.

parts of a full-scale replica of an actual Montreal house, complete with in-ground swimming pool, constructed on the concrete floor of this brooding, cavernous space. Backyard fences and shrubbery surround the pool, which ripples quietly, waiting to unleash lethal surprises.

"We went to a lot of trouble to get the pool lit properly," comments producer Lewis. "We had to install a lot of extra underwater lights in it, many more than an ordinary pool would have, so as to get the intense dramatic lighting effects we needed for the big confrontation scene. To the camera, it still looks quite natural, what a real pool would resemble at night. That all fits in, though, because deception is a big part of this movie."

To underscore his words, set decorators work away, adding the details for an upcoming scene: newspaper clippings and shopping lists for the bulletin board of a family's kitchen. Outside the walls, heavy lights are positioned to shine in the windows and cables connected. Reflectors are tilted just so, then moved and set again. The darkness gets pushed back for the moment by what seems to be bright, domestic warmth. But in another part of the space, cheery bedroom walls and furnishings fall into shadow as the crew abandons them. Everywhere is the buzz of intent conversation, and the air crackles with decisions being made.

In the background stands Stephan (*RoboCop*) Dupuis, who won an Oscar for his work on *The Fly* and now serves as supervisor of makeup FX for *The Kiss*. "The most interesting thing for me about this movie, from a technical point of view, is the use of gelatin on the facial appliance," Dupuis confides. "Gelatin was used for years and years but has been pretty much discarded in favor of foam latex appliances for putting on an actor's face. Doug Drexler and Kevin Haney, while working on *Poltergeist III*, developed this new formula for gelatin appliances. The advantage of these is that they are so skinlike, they can be colored exactly like an actor's skin. You put them on, melt the edges with water, and no one knows the difference. The appliances are much easier and quicker to make than foam latex. It's exciting to work with that. The rest is mostly bladder stuff, things that move around in Joanna Pacula's chest and so on."

"We're dealing with a character who can project evil over a distance and affect others."
—director Pen Densham

Joanna (*Gorky Park*) Pacula stars as Felice, a stunning but mysterious fashion model who invades and takes over the lives of a normal American family. Nick (*Hitchhiker*) Kilbertus plays Jack, the father who, almost too late, struggles to save his daughter (Meredith Salenger) and is aided in his efforts by his friend and neighbor Brenda (Mimi Kuzyk). But it is the alluring Felice herself who requires the most remarkable

You have to love a movie like *The Kiss* for taking one of the world's most beautiful actresses and doing *this* to her.

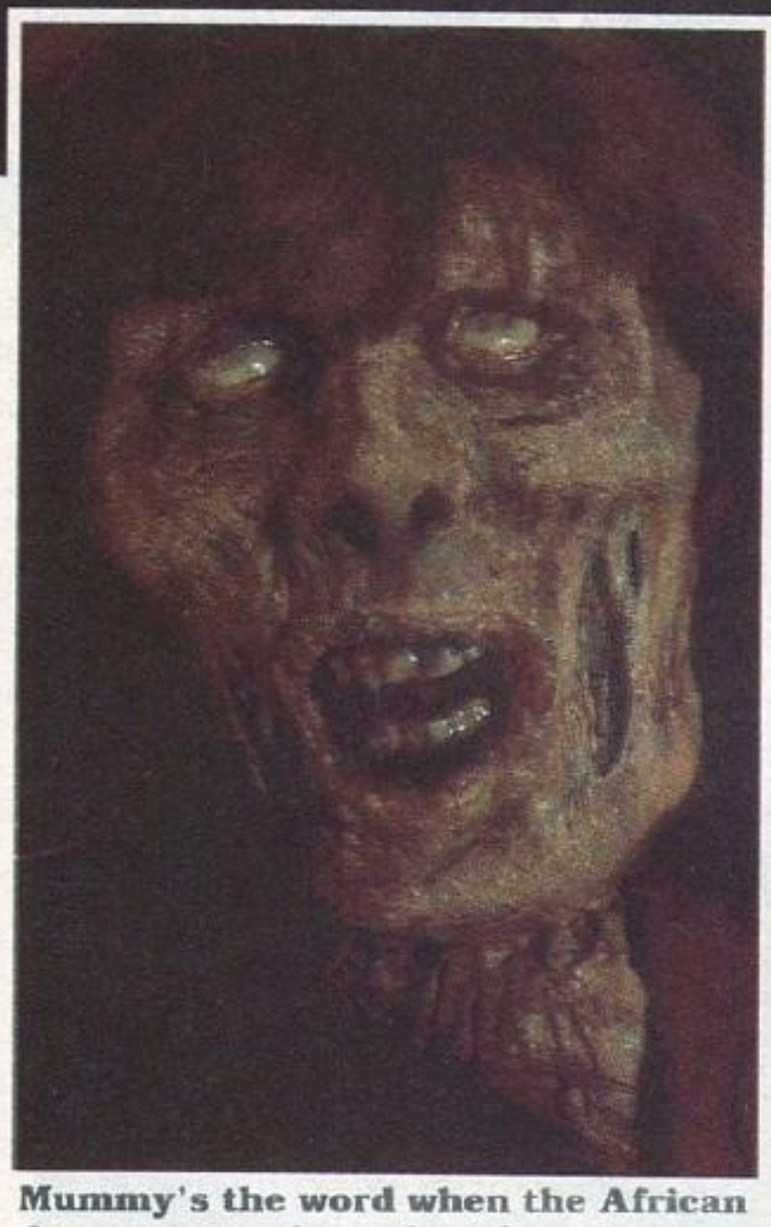
Chris Walas and Stephan Dupuis, who shared an Oscar for *The Fly*, did the *Kiss* FX, including this nasty demon cat.

jaws snap, of course, and it spits. There's a tube in the cat's throat so it can spit a tremendous distance.

"For longer shots, we use simpler versions of the cat," he goes on. "There's one special one, for instance, that we use for the scene when it gets burnt up at the end. The thing moves so fast in the story, it's almost a blur, but we had to make it look real. It looks a lot like an ordinary cat, but when you actually stare at it, it's quite different. The claws and legs are separate pieces for when it attacks people and scratches their faces off and so on."

Dubbed a "psychological thriller" by Lewis, *The Kiss* is mental rather than physical in its horror. "It's a movie that disturbs and unsettles you, first of all," comments Lewis on the Stephen (*Gothic*) Volk/Tom Ropelewski-scripted film. "Then it builds towards a more and more crushing climax. You feel for the people and the horrible, insidious thing that's happening to them, instead of just being scared by things jumping out of the dark. But it becomes very, very scary, too."

"What you have here is a very domestic setting: a family in a comfortable home barbecuing by the pool," director Densham amplifies. "Before they know it, the whole



Mummy's the word when the African demon grows impatient for a host.

transformation FX in the movie.

"She goes from being amazingly beautiful through various stages of decay and ends up a wizened old mummylike thing," explains Dupuis. "In a way, it's even more difficult than *The Fly*, because all the appliances are separate and they're glued onto her body as the disease progresses. On *The Fly*, Jeff Goldblum wore a suit for the final stages, which he just stepped into.

"With Joanna, it all has to be blended to her own skin, which is quite an ordeal," he continues. "On top of that, she goes through a sequence where her chest starts heaving as the creature inside starts pushing against her rib cage. It's quite suggestive, of course. For that sequence, she wears over her torso a skin piece containing a bladder system with tubes. It became quite complex. I don't want to make her look like an old bag, but a young woman whose skin becomes taut. She still has some beauty, but becomes gaunt, dried out, used up. It's much more horrible and scary that way. There is also the disease, a growth that spreads over her toward the end, and all the cuts and blood and fire. There was a lot to do in a short time, with only five weeks for preparation."

Chris Walas, who shared the *Fly* Oscar with Dupuis, was actually in charge of makeup FX but concentrated on the mechanical FX leaving the appliances to Dupuis. The lion's share of the mechanical FX lay in the several versions of a demon cat that assists Felice in her effort to transfer the evil entity inside herself into young Amy.

"There are many shots involving the demon cat," notes Walas, who's now directing *The Fly II*, "so we made different models. The one we use for close-ups is fully articulated, using cables. Its eyes and facial muscles move, its ears and lips. Its

"The horror is that this beautiful young woman is a relative . . . isn't that the last place you look for pure evil, in your own family?" —producer Richard Lewis

fabric of their family life has been completely perverted and destroyed. We're dealing with a character who can project evil over a distance and affect others with it. I tried very hard to make that element real and believable. It's harder than when you have someone pointing a gun at people, because that's much easier for the audience to understand."

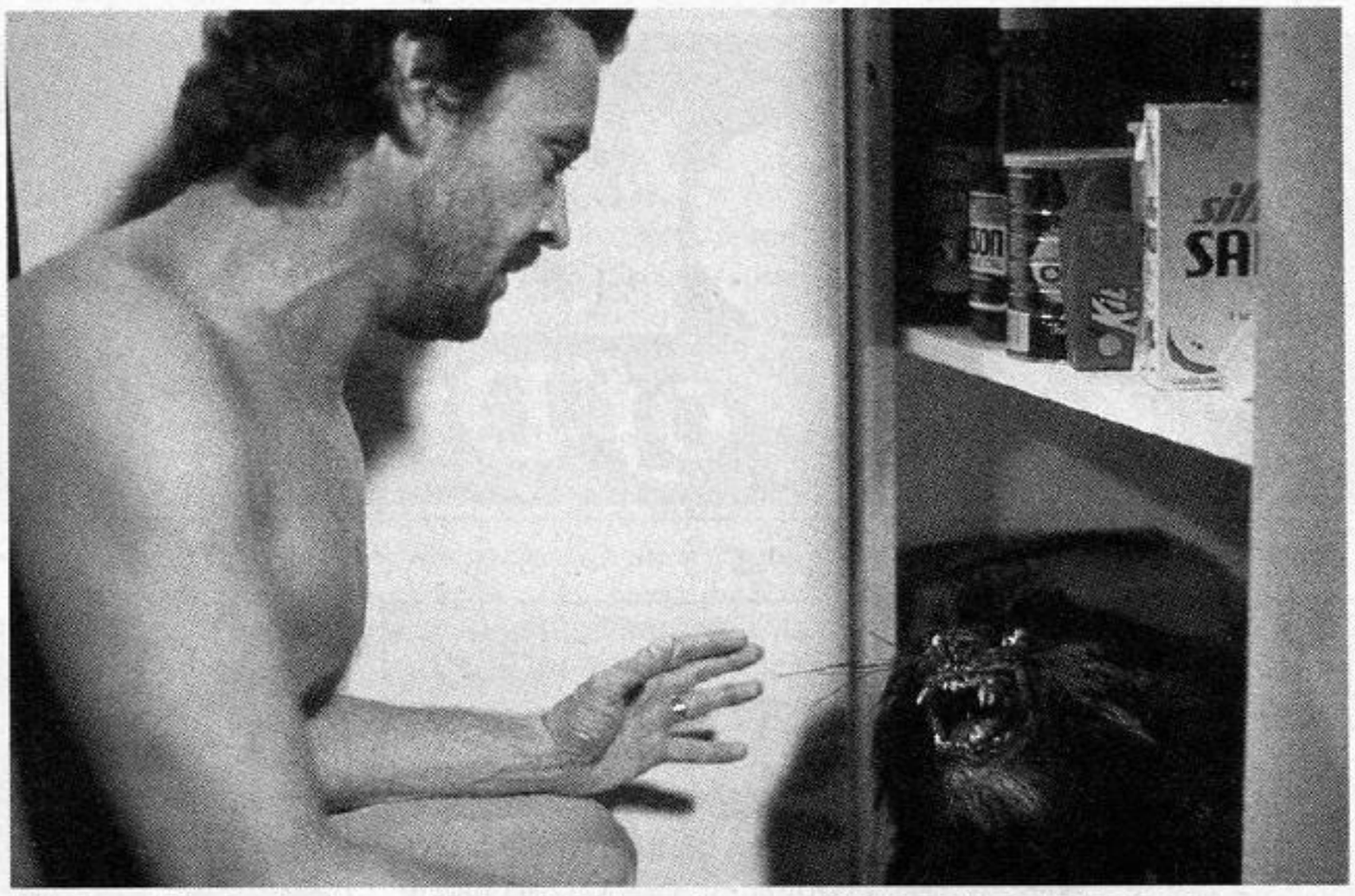
Densham points out that this is

not merely psychological manipulation by an evil person, but an actual supernatural presence that does real, physical harm. "What makes it different from something like *The Exorcist*," Lewis maintains, "is that in *The Exorcist*, you had an evil presence that was very obvious and blatant in its methods. Here we have an entity that disguises itself in the form and body of a very beautiful young woman and works secretly, deceptively.

"Another powerful element of the horror is that this beautiful young woman is a relative, a member of the family," he adds. "I mean, isn't that the last place you look for pure evil, in your own family? Yet from the standpoint of a child or an adolescent like Amy, an aunt, suddenly appearing on the scene, can be a threatening figure. Just by her presence, she upsets or changes the texture of family life. Everything is appearance, everything is deceptive, and when the evil finally breaks out and rampages around, what have the members of this family got to defend themselves with?"

The Kiss is Pen Densham's first horror movie and his first feature. He comes from a strong cinematic background, having grown up around cameras and film sets with his parents in England. In Canada, he spent some years in Toronto, directing commercials for TV and documentary films, including two with media prophet Marshall McLuhan. His company Insight Productions won 80 awards and two Oscar nominations for its shorts and documentaries. With partners Lewis and John Watson, he worked in Hollywood as creative consultant on *Rocky II*, *Quicksilver* and *The Beast*, among other films, and has written scripts for several features and TV shows.

Now at the helm of the $6 million *The Kiss*, Densham keeps a keen eye on all elements of the production, right down to the lighting. For example, he showed director of photography Francois Protat his "image bank," a portfolio of thousands of pictures Densham has collected over the years, to get at the quality of lighting required. The director wants *The Kiss* to feel suffused with light, as if the light was fighting its way into the camera. "I always want the sense that there is life, positiveness out there. I never want this film to get dark and negative," he explains.



Angry at losing a key role in *Pet Sematary*, a feline actor gets mean.

Such an approach might seem unusual, given the subject matter, but this narrative has three very strong female characters played by three very attractive women—one of whom (Meredith Salenger as Amy) must be a very sympathetic one for the audience. "It just didn't seem right to me to make a movie with those faces in a way that was negative," Densham frowns. "I wanted Joanna, one of the world's most beautiful women, to look powerful, and have her beauty as an attribute. It's important to the story and the theme, so we shot it all as clean as possible, with no smoke except where it seemed valid and appropriate to add depth."

Even with all its pretty pictures and Walas-Dupuis FX prowess, distributor Tri-Star remains cold on the completed project: They changed the title twice and bumped *The Kiss*' theatrical release date on several occasions. The company currently plans a regional opening this month, a fate which befell the same studio's underrated—and barely released—*Night of the Creeps*. Could Densham's inexperience with the genre have anything to do with it?

"I didn't really know anything about horror movies before," Densham confesses, "so I screened as many successful ones as I could and read over 25 books on the subject, doing my homework. I hired the best people available to work with me. I was very lucky to get Chris Walas and his people. They can pick and choose the projects they want to work on. They've done marvelous work, and I've felt very secure doing my job."

The climactic pool confrontation required some bizarre lighting.

Kiss Photos: Copyright 1988 Tri-Star

THE VIDEO EYE of Dr. Cyclops

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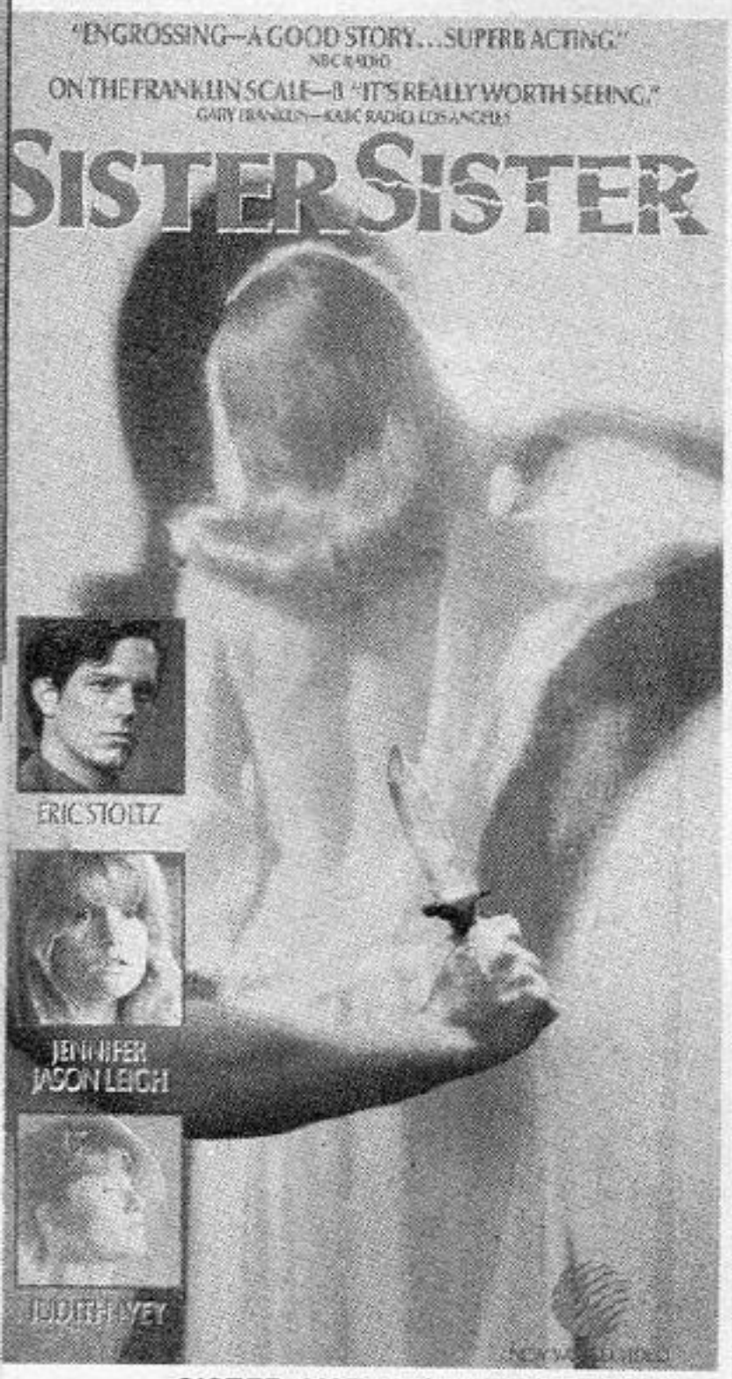
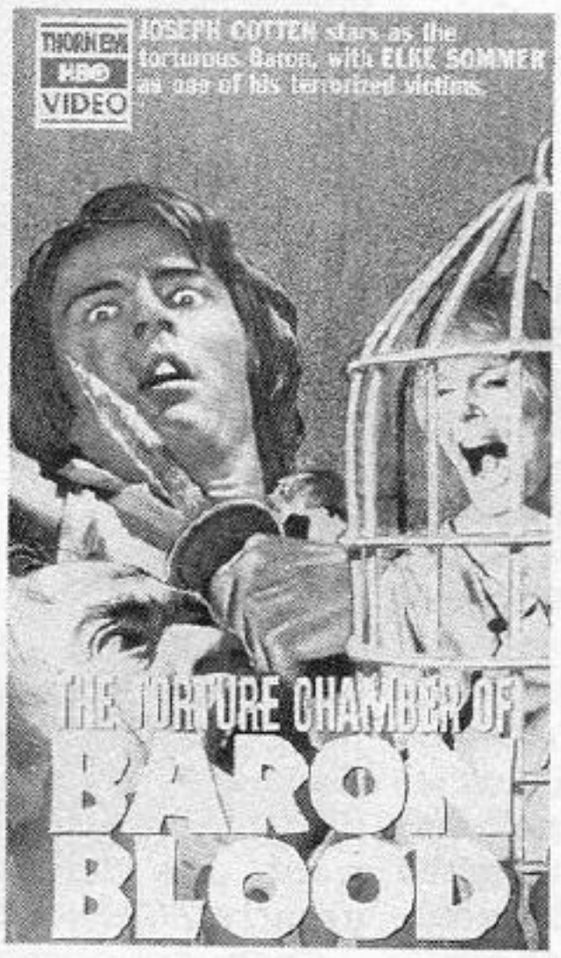


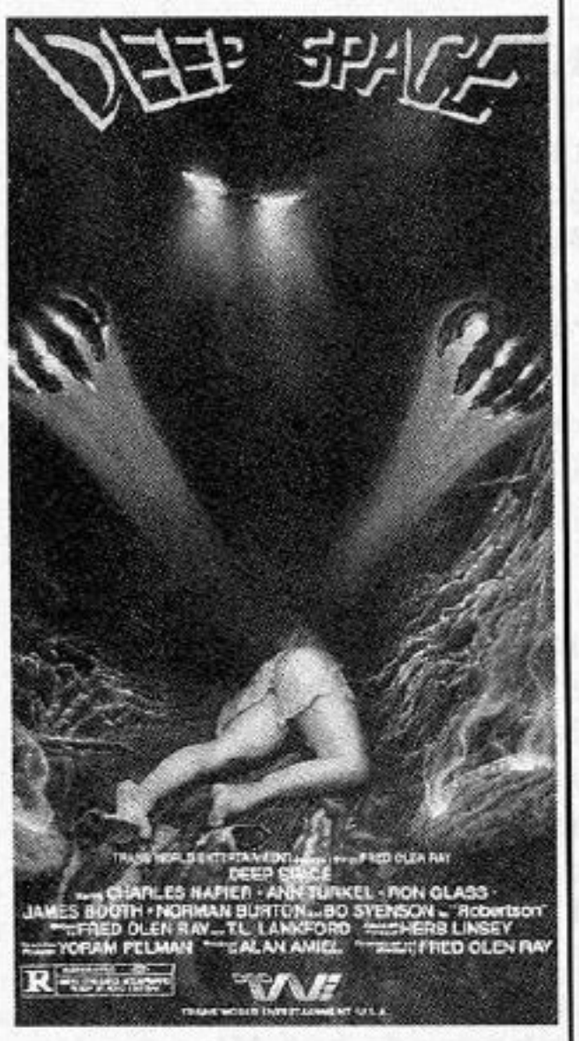
SISTER SISTER (NEW WORLD): The Bonnard sisters are a strange pair. Since their parents died, life's been a little rough. Lucy (Jennifer Jason Leigh) was institutionalized for a while and Charlotte (Judith Ivey) has acted as an over-protective mother to care for her "delicate" sibling. Together they run an inn on the family's old Willows plantation, deep in Louisiana bayou country. And together they harbor an old secret that rises to the surface when a young man, Matt Rutledge (Eric Stoltz), checks into the Willows. Soon passions erupt and the visitor, also carrying around some heavy emotional baggage, plays sister against sister to satisfy his taste for revenge. If all this sounds a wee bit melodramatic and Gothic, it should. This movie has all of those tattered-paperback elements: sex, a gator-infested swamp, a ghost story delivered during a raging storm, more sex and two slightly off-balance sisters. Credit co-screenwriter and director Bill Condon with breathing life into what could have been a stale, routine potboiler. Some of the dialogue *is* on the stale pot-boiler side, but Condon makes great use of his fine cast and movie-perfect locations. His pacing is steady, and the mood is appropriately musty and cold. The picture is brought down a notch or so by Condon's one major mistake: the arrival of a trio of obnoxious New Jersey tourists, including an old, cussing woman wearing a *Bride of Frankenstein* wig. Constantly commenting on the blossoming relationship between Matt and Lucy to anyone who'll listen, she comes off like an annoying geek chorus; her grating presence distracts in such a painterly milieu. But that aside, here's a chiller to put on if you're tired of Jason and Freddy's latest hack-'em-ups and want to try something different. Who knows, your mom may even like it.

THE TORTURE CHAMBER OF BARON BLOOD (THORN EMI/HBO): Never mind what the box says, this is Mario Bava's *Baron Blood*. A lot of you folks have been waiting a long time to see this Italian/West German effort uncut—and you're going to



keep right on waiting. This is the goreless American version, as evidenced by the substitution of Lex Baxter's score for Stelvio Cipriani's. The far-from-groundbreaking story revolves around American Peter Kleist's return to the hometown of his horrid Austrian ancestor Baron Otto von Kleist, a thinly-namechecked figure from history—you know, kind of a "Ned the Impaler." Young Kleist and his architecture-restoring girlfriend (Elke Sommer, easily the most captivating screen presence since Sally on *Davey and Goliath*) goof around with an incantation designed to summon the Baron back to life. Holy moley, it works! After a brief rampage across the countryside in grotesquely disfigured form, the Baron reappears as a wheelchair-bound Joseph Cotten, as spiffy and charming and wicked behind the facade as you could ask for (not too surprising, since Cotten's best known as Uncle Charley in *Shadow of a Doubt*). The Baron buys back his castle and gets things swinging once again, with peasants in the iron maiden and corpses dangling from the battlements. Now Sommer and friend must somehow return the Baron to hell—but the darn wind blew the incantation parchment into the fire. "Oh, if only I could remember the other way to send the Baron back," laments Sommer as though trying to recall a lost grocery list. *Baron Blood* wrings much atmosphere and some excellent imagery out of this cliche plot, and certain moments of the photography are breathtaking. So is Sommer in a miniskirt.

DEEP SPACE (TWE): Its' been said that West Coast schlockmeister Fred Olen Ray is the current movie scene's equivalent to the '60s' Roger Corman. In many ways, that comparison is appropriate: Ray is ridiculously prolific, churning out pictures that look good despite their meager budgets. And, like Corman's before him, Ray's output has been wildly inconsistent. *Deep Space*, one of his "bigger" movies, is also one of his biggest disappointments, a tired, awkwardly handled *ALIEN* clone notable only for some inspired casting and a fairly elaborate (though totally derivative) main monster. At the movie's outset, a secret U.S. Government defense project stationed in outer space crashes to earth. Soon the "weapons," seemingly indestructible creatures, do their predictable dirty deeds. A pair of gruff detectives (Charles Napier and *Barney Miller*'s Ron Glass) are sent to investigate the murders of a couple found at the crash site, and they soon find themselves on a monster hunt. When Glass is killed early on, leggy Ann Turkel (misspelled in the



opening credits—wake up, Fred!) helps Napier get rid of the critters. It's obvious that Ray and his collaborator T.L. Lankford took the old adage "Talk is cheap" to heart, for they fill the movie with loads of it—in cars, in labs, in police stations, in bed. And when the action finally does kick in during the last reel, it's stuff we've all seen done better before. In fact, there's even an unabashed swipe from *ALIEN*, featuring a uniformed guard, a cat and a slime-covered creature. Throw in a ludicrous subplot featuring a haggard Julie Newmar, below-par contributions from genre vets composer Robert O. (*Evils of the Night*) Ragland and director of photography Gary (*Satan's Sadists*) Graver, and you haven't got much now, have you?

HOUSE ON HAUNTED HILL (KEY): Ask any self-respecting horror fan to choose the definitive haunted house movie and a finger will immediately—and correctly—point to *The Haunting*. *House on Haunted Hill*, a 1959 William Castle effort, is hardly on a par with that beaut, but it's a satisfying chiller that holds up surprisingly well today. Vincent Price stars as Frederick Loren, an eccentric, cuckolded millionaire who rents out a fortresslike mansion in which seven people have been murdered over the years. He has invited five strangers, including *Nanny and the Professor*'s Richard Long and great character actor Elisha Cook, to a "party" at the house. And if they can manage to survive one night there, he'll award each of them $10,000. When the guests arrive (in hearses, natch!), things begin to go bump in the night. Severed hands start turning up inside suitcases and hanging in closets. Director Castle really knew how to pour on the scare tactics, throwing in numerous red herrings and punctuating scenes with terrifying thunder and lightning and ominous music. He also has Carol Ohmart and Carolyn Craig (as Loren's wife and a party guest, respectively) contribute some of the loudest screams ever committed to celluloid. It's a pity that gimmick master Castle's Emergo technique (on the movie's original theatrical run, skeletons flew across the auditorium's seats) can't be duplicated on video, but the movie doesn't really require any of this window dressing. It's a solid, old-fashioned spook movie that, after almost 30 years, still has the power to goose an audience.

SLUGS (NEW WORLD): Something really icky is going on in the quaint upstate New York town of Ashton. The accidental razing of an old toxic waste dump to build a shopping center has let loose thousands of jumbo black mutant slugs. They slither through the labyrinthian sewer network and pour out

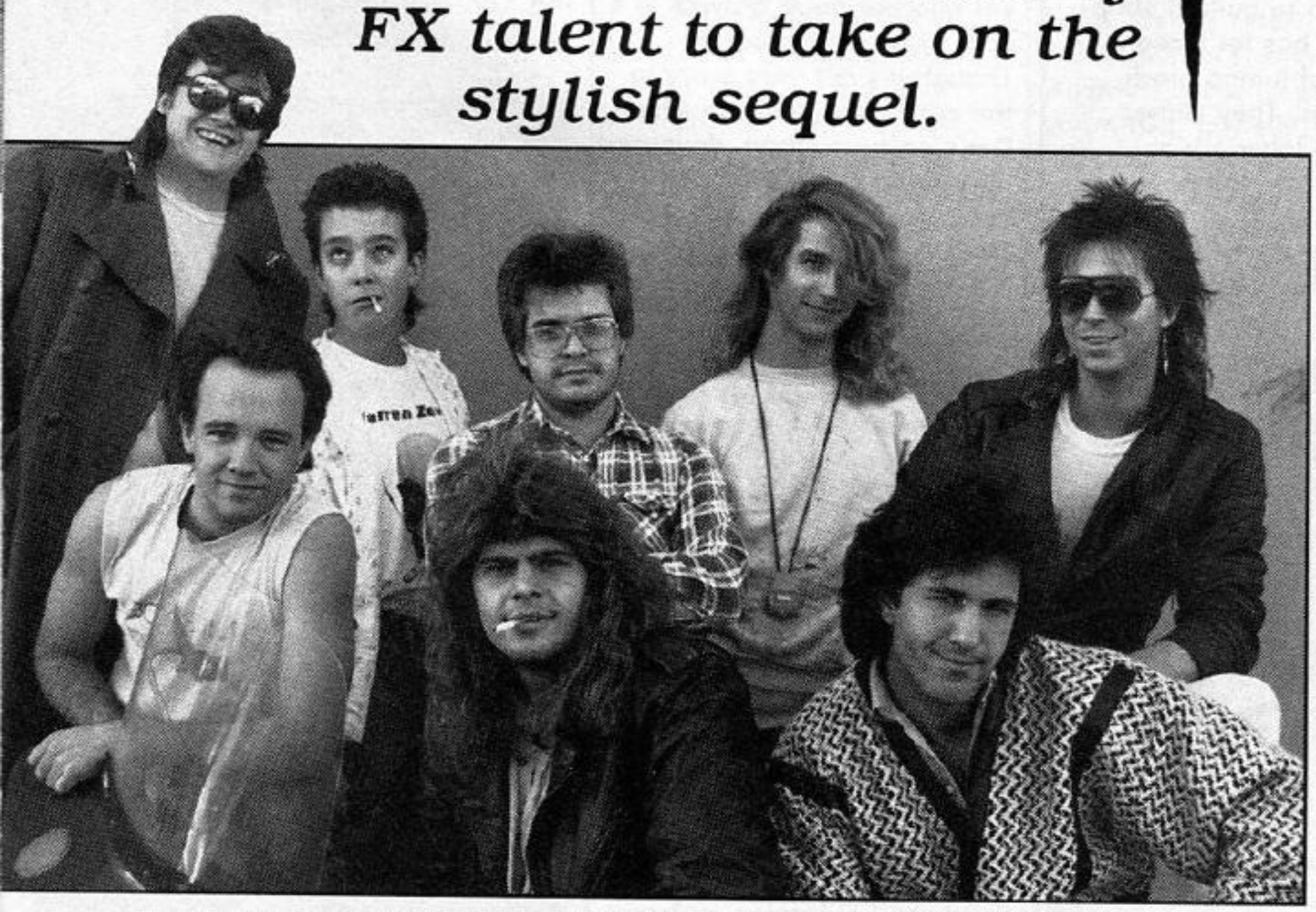
of faucets and up through toilet bowls. When mysterious gruesome deaths start occurring in the usually quiet hamlet, Ashton's health inspector Mike Brady (Michael Garfield) soon discovers that the mutilated bodies are the work of a killer strain of slugs with really sharp teeth, and he quickly hops on their slimy trail. A worthwhile, albeit gross, addition to the environmental menace subgenre, *Slugs* is a real hoot. Based on Shaun Hutson's novel and directed without an iota of restraint by J.P. (*Pieces*) Simon, the movie is really little more than a collection of truly disgusting set pieces. In one, a gardener unknowingly dons a gloveful of slugs, only to resort to some serious self-mutilation. Later, a yuppie wife unwittingly slices up a slug in a salad for her hungry husband, who proceeds to display a particularly nasty allergic reaction to toxic mollusks. And let's just say a pair of copulating teens don't escape unblemished. Though mostly shot in New York, this Spanish co-production features some laughable dubbing and rancid emoting. But these are just minor quibbles—it is the unflinching carnage that is *Slugs*' raison d'etre. Hands are hacked off, a geyser of worms erupts from a guy's head and yet another dupe drowns in a pool of the title creatures. Though it's not very scary in the conventional sense (the Doc's anchovy pizza, devoured during the screening, was a good deal more horrifying), *Slugs* delivers, and it looks like a sequel's in the offing.

HOWLING III (VISTA): The dilemma of how anyone could let Philippe Mora direct another *Howling* sequel (or another movie, for that matter) after the incredibly inept *Howling II* will be on cinema scholars' minds for decades to come, yet the most important question regarding this follow-up is whether it's as bad as *Howling II*. No, it's not. Don't get your hopes up, please. In this case, practice does not make perfect. Instead of Southern Californian or Transylvanian werewolves as in the previous outings, producer-writer-director Mora comes up with Australian ones, more specifically, *marsupial* werewolves. This breed sports pouches and nurses their young, too. Barry Otto plays a nice doctor who wants to track down and study this bizarre offshoot, and he goes straight to the President of the United States to get his OK. Meanwhile Down Under, there's a sort of werewolf convention going on, as a Russian ballerina lycanthrope defects to the outback to meet her marsupial mate. Jerboa, another of the tribe, refuses to make it on all fours and runs off to Sydney where she meets the cute Donny. Jerboa and Donny (Imogen Annesley and Leigh Biolos) fall in love, and Donny casts his lady in a campy horror movie. The convoluted sequel really loses control when the government decides to announce open season on werewolves, and the lovers hightail it to the outback to raise a family! *Howling III*, unlike its predecessor, features good production values, passable FX and more coherence, but it fails because it lacks focus and can't make up its mind whether it's a satire or a horror film. The funniest bit lampoons *American Werewolf*, though none of *Howling III* is even remotely scary. Perhaps by the time he gets to *Howling XIV*, Mora might have the formula nailed down.

Makeup FX supervisor Bart Mixon gets all the girls.

A HARD DAY'S FRIGHT NIGHT

Bart Mixon assembles a virtual Murderers' Row of FX talent to take on the stylish sequel.



The FX gang's all here: (top left) Jim McLoughlin, Brent Baker, Bart Mixon, Gregor Punchatz, Aaron Sims, (bottom) Barney Burman, Gabe Bartalos and Brian Wade.

By MARC SHAPIRO

Talk about feeling like a kid in a candy store, Bart Mixon had a mouthful of Milky Ways the day he opened the script for *Fright Night—Part 2*. "I turned to a page and it said, 'Regine suddenly turns into a monster from hell,' " recalls Mixon. "I thought to myself, 'A monster from hell? This is going to be fun.' "

Mixon remembers that introduction to the FX-laden *Fright Night* sequel from the comfortably cluttered office of Make-up FX Unlimited. The fledgling company, whose *Fright Night—Part 2* chores were its first gig as the creature/prosthetics right arm of Fantasy II, is putting the finishing touches on the film. The odd insert and miniature is being shot or fine-tuned, but Mixon, studying an FX breakdown for an upcoming production, is already primed for new projects.

Mixon, a contributor to *Terminator* and *RoboCop*, had worked with Fantasy II's Gene Warren Jr. on many occasions. Talk between the two had gotten serious about a makeup adjunct to Fantasy II's visual magic. His first official effort under the Make-up FX Unlimited banner was a dummy head for *Dracula's Widow*. When Warren offered Mixon's shop as a bonus in bidding for the *Fright Night—Part 2* job, Mixon suddenly found himself keying one monster of a monster movie.

"There's definitely more monster-type things in this film than in the first *Fright Night*," compares Mixon. "The stuff in the original was nice, but we've definitely got much more of it."

So much, in fact, that Mixon ran into difficulty assembling a crew for what would ultimately be two groups of makeup people working on the movie. "At one point, a lot of people were available," relates Mixon. "But by the time I found out we would be doing prosthetics, too, many of the people I wanted were working elsewhere. I started with a core group and was able to get other people for short periods of time."

Anchoring the core group was key sculptor Brian (*Jason Lives*) Wade, key painter Aaron Sims, key moldmaker Jim McLoughlin and a moonlighting (from Rick Baker's studio) Norman Cabrera. Also on board for various periods of time were Gabe (*Brain Damage*) Bartalos, Barney Burman, Brent Baker, Matt Rose, Bill Sturgeon, Joey Orosco,

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EDITOR'S NOTE: At presstime, New Century/Vista bumped Fright Night—Part 2 *to a fall release.*

Gregor Punchatz and Richard Snell. It was a heavyweight FX lineup that, in less capable hands, could have caused some major ego problems.

"It didn't," testifies Bartalos. "The reason was that Bart took advantage of everybody's artistic abilities. Everybody on the crew was given one specific effect that was their own and then offered the opportunity to float and help out in other areas. Everybody knew what everybody was good at, so we didn't have to waste time feeling each other out."

By Mixon's estimation, fully 90 percent of *Part 2*'s makeup and prosthetic work that his company handled centered around the seductress vampire Regine, and the most ambitious energies went into a subtle transformation in facial appearance that Regine (Julie Carmen) undergoes at several points in the film, most radically in a party scene where she switches back and forth between normal and weird. "[Director] Tommy Lee Wallace wasn't sure what he wanted," explains Mixon of the design process. "He kept saying, 'Max Headroom,' and I kept saying, 'What's that mean?' "

What it meant was that Wade, credited with the "Super Regine" sculpture, and Mixon resorted to sculpting nine clay sketches before a design everybody could live with was decided upon. "We came up with three appliance pieces," lists Wade, "a lowered brow with an overlapping nose piece, a U-shaped cheek piece and a jaw piece that fit under the cheek and went from temple to temple."

During postproduction, it was decided that a close-up would be needed for the sequel's stop-motion bat sequence. Mike Joyce and Bart Mixon swung into action and rebuilt the radio-controlled puppet.

For the transformation, Carmen was photographed both in and out of makeup in front of a blue screen and with a motion-controlled camera. Carmen, all the while, was seated in a special chair that kept her dress and a prop arm in registration while the more exotic makeup was applied. Gene Warren Jr., the film's visual FX supervisor, oversaw the scene's filming and the subsequent dissolving and matting of the two images into one shot.

"That was a really iffy proposition," confesses Mixon, "and we're still not sure how it will look once the opticals are added, but the original sequence turned out nice."

The elevator sequence in which Regine appears in midtransformation into a giant bat (i.e. the earlier "monster from hell" description)

For this effect, Bart Mixon and Jim McLoughlin applied gelatin makeups to a double's hands which were positioned in-frame to help bring the burnt Regine puppet to life.

Stage two of the burnt Regine, minus its gelatin skin.

provided some major design challenges, to which everybody on the crew arose. Aaron Sims contributed some early sketches. Mixon threw in some ideas centered around his penchant for long skinny fingers. Bartalos and Cabrera began mental preparation for monstrous legs and detailing. McLoughlin had a nifty tongue in mind.

"Our initial reaction was to go with something wild with yard-long ears and spines coming out of the arms," claims Wade, who's now assisting Steve Johnson on *Nightmare 4*. "The teeth were going to be really monstrous. But the director's input, and the fact that the creature had to bear some resemblance to the finished giant bat puppet, resulted in reduction of the ears and teeth. What we came up with is good, but we could have come up with something totally wild."

Bartalos reveals that the monster claw hands were sculpted in clay and epoxy with a spandex support and finger caps attached. "I also painted the nails and punched in the hair," he says. "It was an easygoing situation. Everybody worked on different things and had a lot of fun." Bill Sturgeon sculpted the creature's neck-to-crotch body suit. Cabrera contributed booty-style monster feet, a cross between a lady and a monster with exaggerated muscles and veins (which, depending on the rumored final edit, may or may not be seen).

(Note: skip the next six paragraphs if you don't want the movie's ending revealed.)

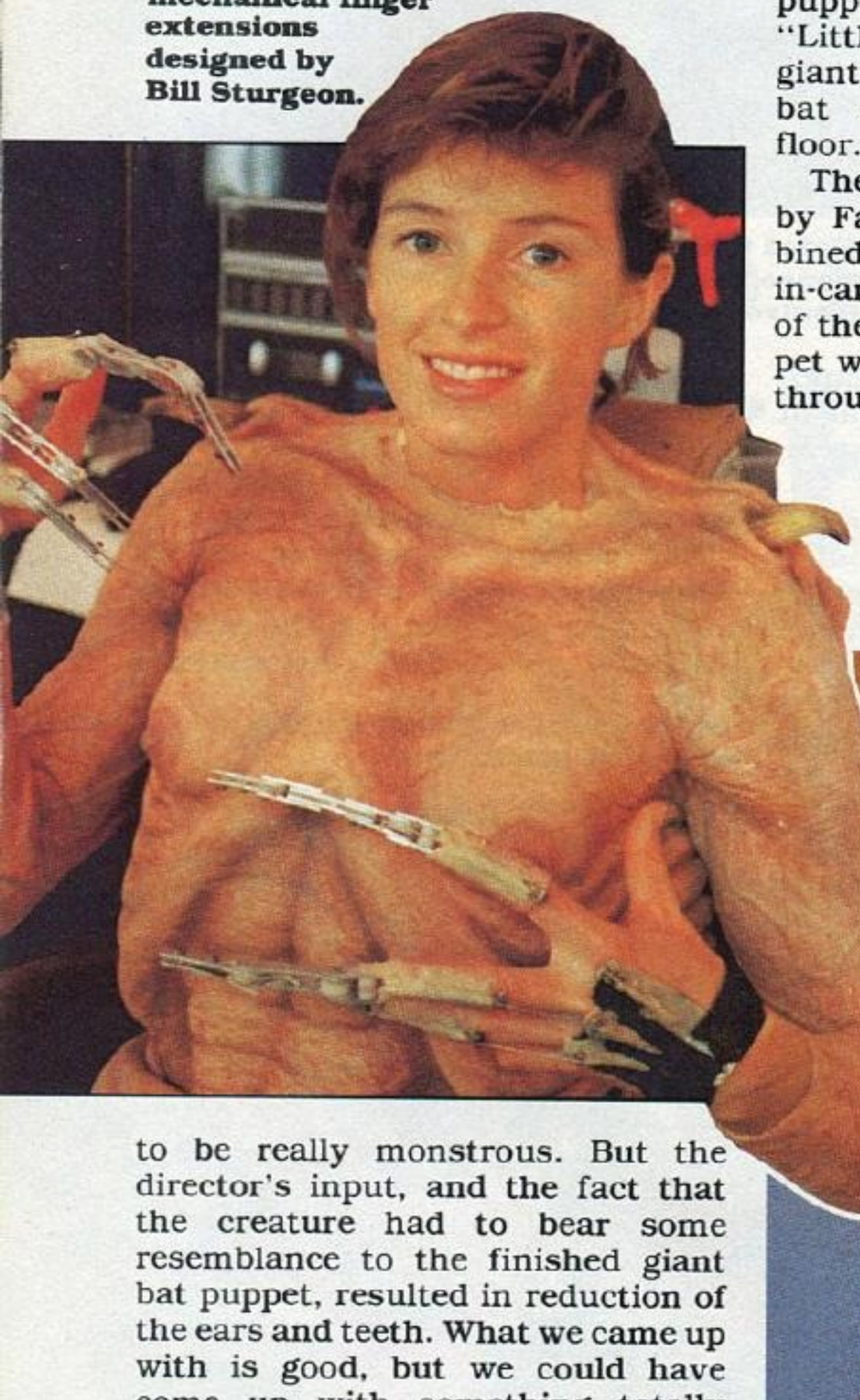
As the sequence unfolds, Regine completes her transformation into the big bat, crashes through the elevator floor and swoops down to the bottom of the shaft. Two bat puppets, a stop-motion miniature sculpted by Brian Wade over a Mike Joyce armature and a full-size puppet molded by McLoughlin and Baker and sculpted by Rose, Wade and Sims were used in the scene. "Originally, the sequence was designed with only the stop-motion puppet in mind," Mixon remembers. "Little by little, it evolved into a giant wing tip and then a full-sized bat seen crashing through the floor."

The stop-motion shots, animated by Fantasy II's Justin Kohn, combined rear-projection live action and in-camera split screens for insertion of the miniature bat. The huge puppet was placed on a rod and pushed through the elevator floor and out the other side—where Regine, returned to the original form and preparing to destroy Charley, is suddenly hit by sunlight reflected off a mirror by Peter Vincent. Original makeup suggestions for the death makeup were rejected by Wallace on the grounds that they were too gross, a problem that was ultimately overcome with a relatively standard-issue gelatin burn makeup applied by McLoughlin and Mixon.

"We made a series of dummy heads," McLoughlin explains. "The first dummy head had mechanics, jaw movement, fangs growing and brow movement, which I built into it. A series of tubes were also attached, which allowed us to pump trichloroethane to swell the head's latex skin. Gelatin burn makeup was applied to a double's hands to help bring the scene to life."

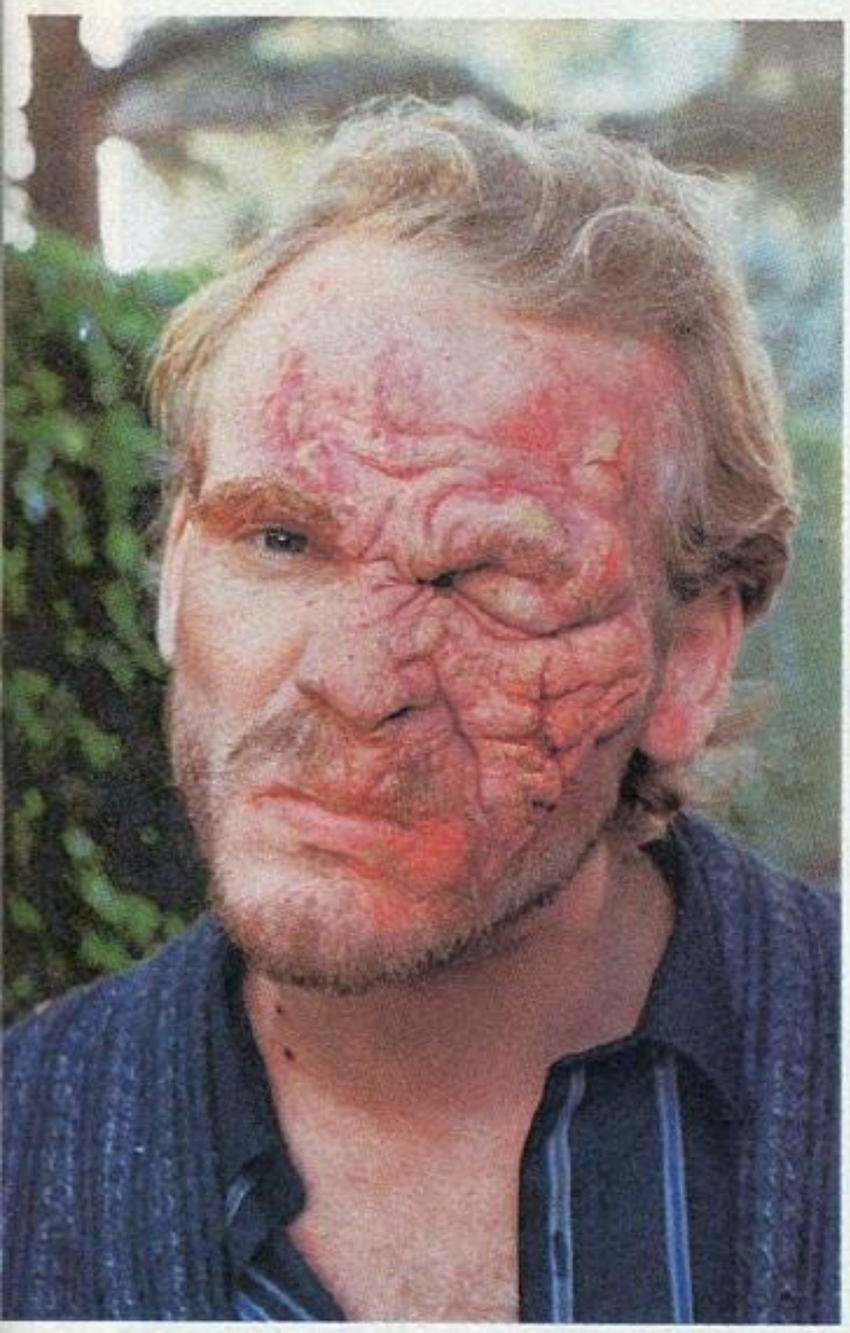
With these elements in place, the boys lit the dummy head on fire to simulate the sequence's beginning in which Regine's flesh begins to burn away. The fiery scene was completed as the skins were stripped off the first dummy head, a new corpse mask slipped over the existing mechanics and a gelatin burn appliance attached over the mask. The head was once again set on fire, exposing the Regine corpse puppet

The Regine Monster hands sported mechanical finger extensions designed by Bill Sturgeon.



Dinah Cancer doubled actress Julie Carmen for her flaming death scene. The entire makeup took three hours to apply.

All Photos: Courtesy Make-up FX Unlimited/Bart J. Mixon



The finished first-stage Richie makeup, applied by Norman Cabrera. Fangs, contacts, and a good coating of K-Y Jelly and pus were added prior to filming. Stage two consisted of a throat piece and a lip/chin piece by Bart Mixon.

For the fiery finale, a Regine body suit, sculpted by Mixon, McLoughlin, Sims and Punchatz and worked on at various stages by the rest of the crew, is torched in various places to simulate the effect of fire damage. A beam of sunlight and flames over the body were added in postproduction by Fantasy II.

"We tried for a droopy, melty look when we were sculpting the corpse body," interjects Sims, a former *Evil Dead II* assistant. "At one point we even showed a nipple melting away, but for whatever reason, that shot did not make the final edit."

The death-by-holy-water of Charley's roommate-turned-vampire Richie offered the FX crew an opportunity to get away from the now-familiar acid burn look. "We decided to go for a more puffy swollen look, kind of like what Dick Smith did in *Spasms*," asserts *Summer School* vet Cabrera, who applied the first-stage Richie makeup. "Facial appliances were created to reflect what the head would look like after tubes were attached, and trichloroethane was pumped through the foam latex appliances, which resulted in that swollen bloated look." The effect, which incorporated a dummy head and facial mechanics, was shot in postproduction by Fantasy II.

Next up on the FX parade was the infamous Newberry, the bowling emporium proprietor who is decapitated and whose head winds up in an alley's ball return. McLoughlin sculpted and added the gore FX from a standard life cast. Bartalos painted it and punched in the hair.

For the scene in which Belle accidentally slices open the chest of Bozworth, plastic hands and sculpted nails were created. "To give the puncture effect that extra push, we fit real X-acto blades into the nails," grins Mixon. "We knew they were going to work when Tommy Wallace cut himself one day while inspecting the hands."

The glowing, melting death of Belle in the holy cloth was accomplished through the use of two skulls. "We used two gelatin heads on that effect," informs Mixon. "One had a fiberglass skull, which we backlighted to begin the meltdown process. Then we cut to a gelatin head with a wax skull to complete the process. The entire effect was done through time-lapse melting in an oven."

Mixon reports that a number of vampire teeth sets were constructed by Snell for the various actors. The shop created an additional large hollow canine, which was raked across an actor's neck in the scene where Charley is bitten by Regine. "There were also a lot of Charley-related molds and sculptures, primarily neck and hand wounds, that were indicated at an early point in the filming but ultimately not used," he sighs.

"There's definitely more monster-type things than in the first *Fright Night*."

—makeup FX supervisor Bart Mixon

Mixon is candid about director Wallace's presence at his shop during production. The director asked for numerous changes and displayed much more interest in his creature makers than usual.

"To a certain extent, it wasn't surprising," Mixon judges. "This was my first time keying a major effect

Brian Wade's rough sculpture of the Regine Monster incorporated Bart Mixon's extended teeth design, elements of an Aaron Sims sketch, and many of Wade's own ideas, such as the oversized ears. Is that teamwork or what?

film, and he probably felt he had to keep an extra eye on me. Tommy also didn't want this to be an all-out effects movie, which was part of the reason why he constantly suggested changes. None of that bothered me. It was *his* movie, and I was more than willing to give him what he wanted to make him happy."

But making Wallace happy did not get in the way of making Mixon happy with what he and his crew accomplished. "We've done a couple of things on this film that haven't been done before, especially with our approach to the Richie effects," he beams. "To a large extent, however, what we've done is traditional. It's primarily a lot of dummy heads and appliances, stuff that's been done before. We knew going in what would work, given the time and money we had, and we went with those things."

To a man, the Make-up FX Unlimited crew views the *Fright Night—Part 2* experience as an enjoyable one. For supervisor Bart Mixon, it was a chance to show his prowess at the head of a major film; for Aaron Sims, who concedes he was the raw rookie in this all-star FX lineup, it was a chance to learn from some established craftsmen. And for everyone in between?

"Man, it was fun," Bartalos grins. "Just a whole lot of fun."

David Goldner/Copyright 1988 Queen "B" Productions

Joan of Arc revisited.

Photo: Bruce Bermelin

It's a case of Hollywood *and* bust for actress Cassandra Peterson.

Elvira Busts Out

America's favorite gorehound gal bids her TV couch adieu as she heads for the silver screen.

By MARC SHAPIRO

Photo: Mark Pierson

Mom says you can always judge someone by the company they keep.

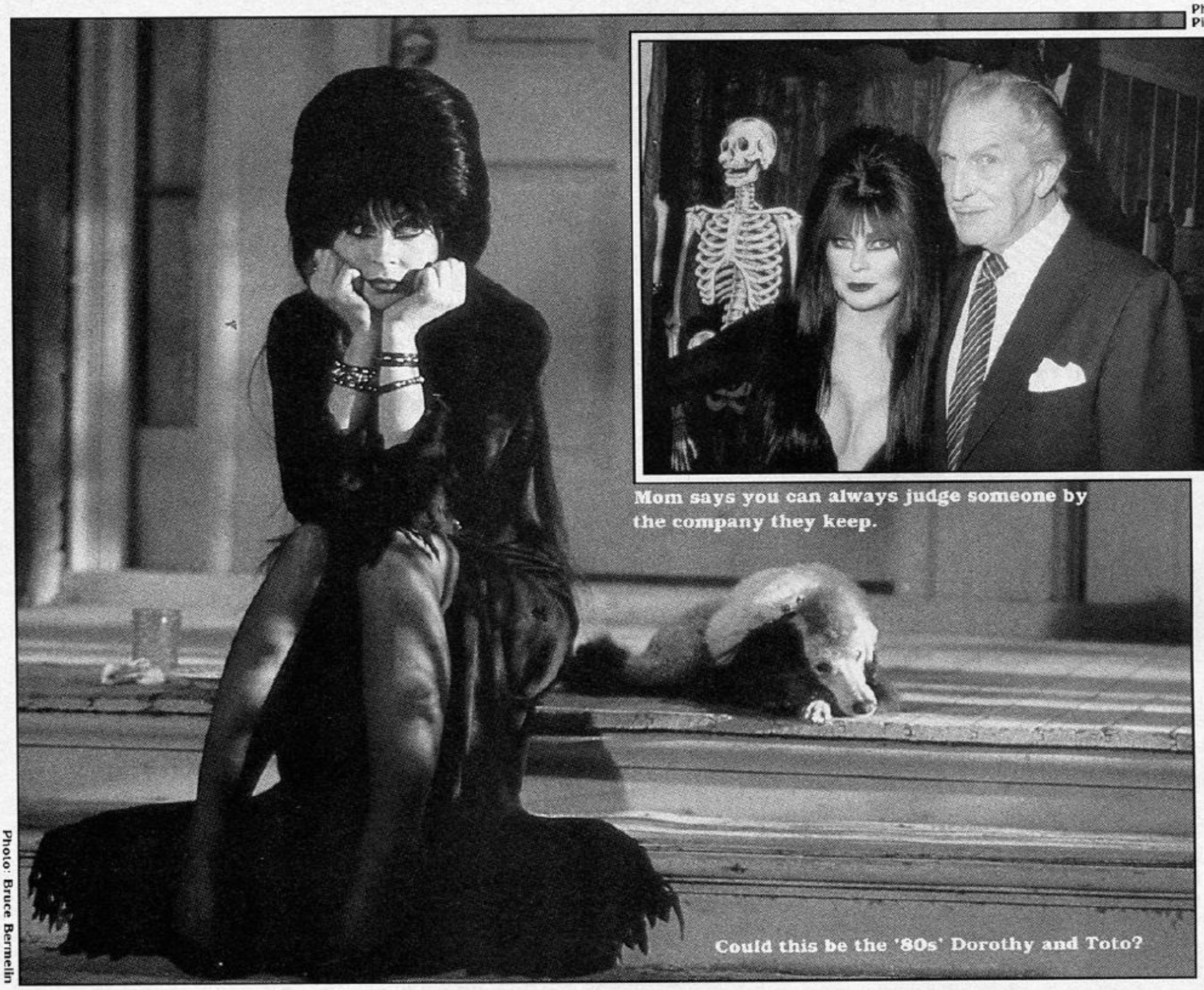


Photo: Bruce Bermelin

Could this be the '80s' Dorothy and Toto?

Cassandra Peterson's cleavage is *not* a special effect . . . well, not in the sense that Rick Baker will get another Oscar nod for it. But for devotees who watch Peterson's alter ego, horror hostess Elvira, falling out of her black slinky dress while poking fun at bad horror films on both the nationally syndicated show *Movie Macabre* and her ThrillerVideo line, her mams have become a national treasure. Mecca. Valhalla. You name it.

"You know, it really doesn't feel like cleavage hanging out," says a serious Peterson. "It feels like a cleft chin or a dimple. In fact, I've been wearing this low-cut dress for so long that I've nearly forgotten why people are talking to me and not looking into my eyes."

Peterson makes this observation on the set of her first foray into big-budget picturedom—New World's *Elvira, Mistress of the Dark*, a comedy with horror trappings that should have a large section of the moviegoing public avoiding Elvira's eyes. Peterson, dressed to kill in trademark black wig, deathly white makeup and clingy, low-cut black dress, is staked out on a Los Angeles soundstage mock-up of Massachusetts countryside, where she is about to be burned as a witch under the guidance of director James (*Easy Money*) Signorelli. Elvira makes like the good little trouper, despite the fact that she's been bound to the wooden pole for the better part of three hours. And you hear nary a complaint when a sequence in which she has to thrust her arm up (to match an effect that will be added in postproduction) results in her dislocating her shoulder.

"This film is really important," concedes Peterson. "We're basically talking 'Make it or break it' time. I could keep hosting movies and doing beer commercials, but I really feel like I'm getting to the end of that trail. At this point, I feel that any future I have has to be in films and with this character. Hell, I could be the next *Rocky*," she laughs.

Elvira, Mistress of the Dark, written by Peterson with *Movie Macabre* crony John (*The Breather*) Paragon and Sam Egan, follows down-and-out horror hostess Elvira as she travels to the small New England town of Fallwell, Massachusetts, to pick up an inheritance that will finance her Las Vegas debut. Once in Fallwell, our heroine runs afoul of crooks, an extension of the Moral Majority and a recipe book that conjures up spirits and monsters. She also discovers that her mother, a witch, married a regular mortal.

Comic misadventures are at the core of this trashy, flashy tale with a happy ending. In fact, *Elvira, Mistress of the Dark* comes across—on paper, anyway—as the type of film that might ultimately find its way to *Movie Macabre*. The project also features Edie McClurg, Jeff Conaway, Morgan Shephard, Daniel Greene and Susan Kellerman. Budget for the 42-day shoot, lensed in various Los Angeles locations, reportedly hit $7.5 million.

One thing is for certain: This is hardly your usual Fango fodder. Despite the presence of such FX people as Dennis Dion, Doug (*Terminator*) Beswick and Pamela

We can't imagine anything scarier than this: Elvira meets Jim Nabors! (From *Stroker Ace*)

Photo: Copyright 1983 Universal City Studios

Photos: Neil Preston/Copyright 1988 New World

(*Rambo*) Westmore, this flick isn't even a gore trickle. Oh, a couple of ghoulies show up, and the severed hand from *Evil Dead II* makes a guest appearance, but as far as being bona fide scare fare, nobody thinks so, least of all the star.

"This is not a horror film," Peterson admits. "It has elements of horror in it, sort of like *Ghostbusters*, but it's basically a comedy. We did not even go so far as to try to combine horror with the comedy."

Elvira's stint at the stake is followed, two weeks later, by something that can best be described as a living room marathon. Signorelli, who in another life directed those tasty little commercials on *Saturday Night Live*, once again prods and pokes at a scene in which Elvira must run through a doorway, round a corner, stop at the base of a stairway and look frantically around while breathing heavily. Peterson makes the trip a couple of times; Signorelli calls time out and confers with the actress to adjust the run to camera specs. Peterson nods in agreement and returns to the starting line.

As Westmore enters for a makeup retouch, the director wanders by to give his input on helming a picture with the Mistress of the Dark. "Part of the trick in making a movie like this is to define the film's universe," clarifies Signorelli. "Once you do that, you can get away with even a cheesy story. I feel like I've identified elements in Elvira's world that are essential to getting the humor across. What we're doing is not a horror parody, but in some instances it does come pretty close. We're treading a fine line between parody and send-up. The horror is just real enough to let people suspend belief and get into the story. This isn't a major prosthetics picture, but there's just enough to make the jokes work."

The source of those FX, Doug Beswick, is a little hard to find. "Just go outside the studio, make a right, then a left and you'll be at the FX trailer," instructs one technician. The directions make the search more confusing until a ghoulish masked extra says, "Follow me."

"What we're doing is all pretty standard stuff," admits Beswick while making a gnarly-looking dude even worse. "We've had some room to play around with characterization on the makeup, but it's all pretty standard-issue. It's a solid job, given the budget of the film, but I wouldn't look for anything spectacular."

Beswick's tune is pretty much echoed by Pam Westmore, the fourth generation of Westmores to make a living by putting powder to face. "Elvira's makeup design has basically been in place since 1981," she explains. "It's her trademark, so there really is not much you can do to improve upon it. I'll accent and highlight things a bit, but it's basically a situation where we leave well enough alone."

Peterson, currently involved with an Australian version of *Movie Macabre*, asserts that *Elvira, Mistress of the Dark* was not a one-shot idea that lucked out and found financing. "I had been wanting to do a film for a long time," she recalls. "John Paragon and I had schlepped around all sorts of treatments with the Elvira character in mind. But for a long time, there was no interest."

And the reason for the reluctance, to a large extent, was Elvira. "Nobody had ever seen the character act," sighs Peterson, "or, for that matter, do anything other than lay on a couch and make fun of bad films. People were afraid to risk money on a character who they feared wouldn't be able to do anything once she stood up."

But Peterson and Paragon persisted and finally came up with a treatment that tempted NBC Productions. Money to write the script and collaborator Sam Egan were thrown their way, and the resultant story has shown that Elvira is capable of a great deal more than falling out of her dress.

"The movie has definitely expanded upon my style of humor," Peterson insists. "Normally, I'm talking into a television screen, but now I'm interacting and reacting with people and situations. It's a PG-13 film, which has allowed me to be more risque and basically do a lot of things we came up with that we couldn't do on television. It's a whole new can of worms."

Peterson, who was born in Manhattan, Kansas, and raised in Colorado Springs, Colorado, came by her old can of worms, *Movie Macabre*, after stints as a rock singer, a dancer and part of the improvisational comedy group the Groundlings. You may have spotted Peterson as a biker in *Pee-Wee's Big Adventure* or as Elvira in Cheech Marin's "Born in East L.A." video and on *The Fall Guy*. With *Movie Macabre* (at least as far as new episodes are concerned) effectively laid to rest, Peterson looks back fondly on her years poking fun at some of the genre's lamest film efforts.

"*Attack of the Killer Tomatoes* was probably the worst movie to write jokes about, because it was a deliberate parody of a horror movie," she remembers. "I ran out of tomato jokes about half way through the movie, and there was basically nothing left to say. *Dr. Black and Mr. Hyde* was another great one; getting comic Arsenio Hall to come on as a black

Who needs a pink cadillac when you've got a black hearse?

sociologist who claimed Bernie Casey should have been drummed out of the black race for being in the movie was a hoot. We also had on what I consider to be a couple of real cult films, *The Werewolf of Washington* and *Rattlers*."

Peterson feels she's adjusted fairly well to the grind of major motion picture filmmaking. "I've got to admit, that first day on the set was a killer," she laments. "I was confused as to how to play things for the big screen, and I wasn't getting a whole lot of help. One person would tell me to play things bigger and broader and somebody else would tell me to calm it down. It also didn't help that the longest piece of dialogue in the movie was that first day. I was freaking out."

But Peterson survived those first-day jitters to the point where she feels her Elvira character has potential for a film life beyond *Mistress of the Dark*. "Elvira is a beer-drinking kind of gal with a lot of overt sexuality and trashiness," she grins. "But there are other, unusual elements to her as well that, in future films, might allow her to be seen in different light. I don't see her being in anything dramatic—hell, I can't get through a dramatic scene without blowing it—but I do see her stretching in a comedic way."

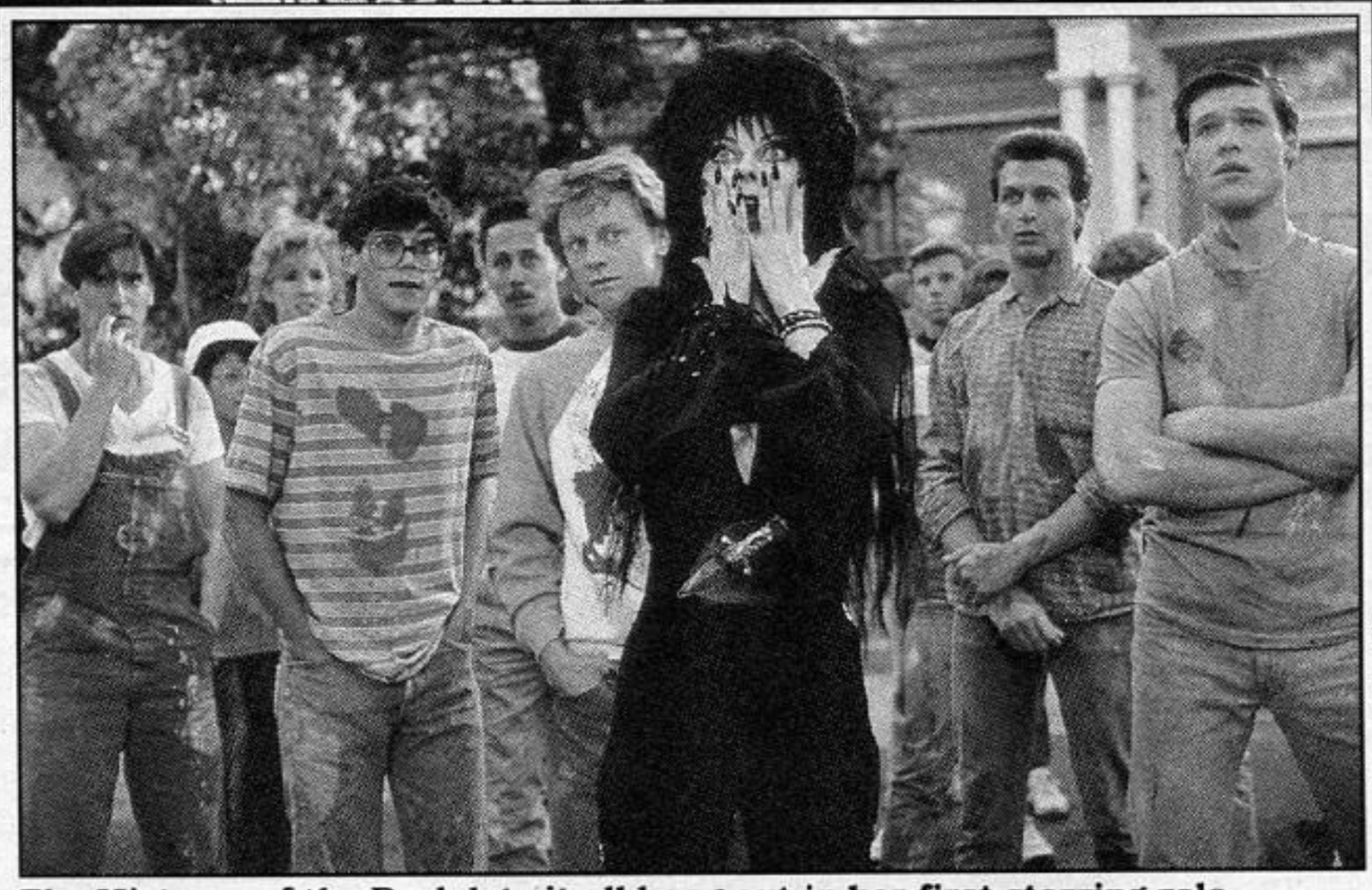


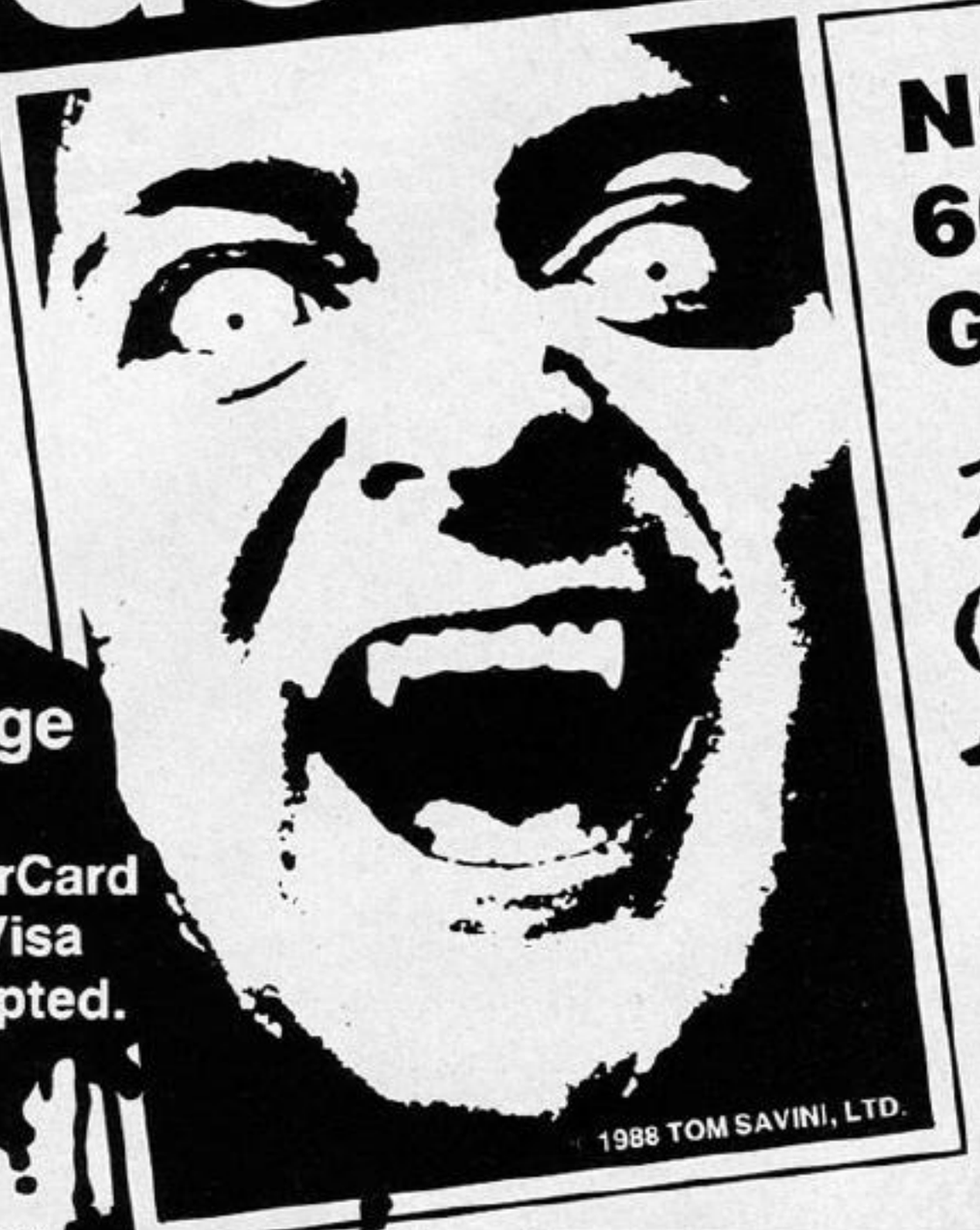
Photo: Bruce Birmelin

The Mistress of the Dark lets it all hang out in her first starring role.

Peterson has hopes that those rushing the turnstiles this fall to see *Elvira, Mistress of the Dark* will be receptive to the film's humorous side, although she says it's not a requirement. "It would be nice if they got the jokes," chuckles Peterson. "But if they don't get the jokes, at least they'll have the cleavage."

OFFICIALLY LICENSED!

GOTCHA!



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ON SET: A Nightmare ON ELM STREET 4 THE DREAM MASTER

Photos: Francois Duhamel, Sygma/Copyright 1988 New Line

Freddy goes to the dogs and plays nurse, among other bizarre developments, as the Krueger saga enters yet another phase.

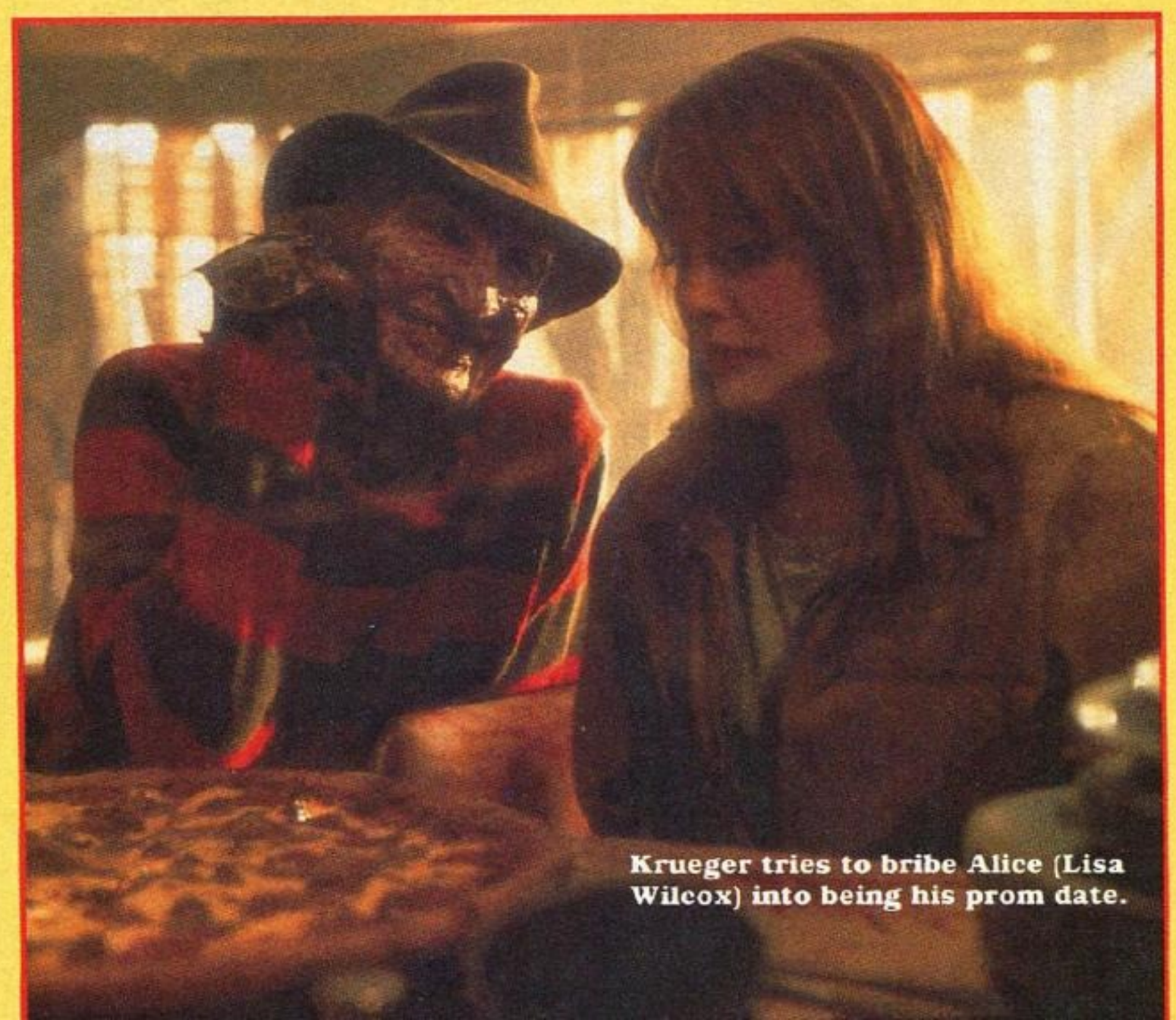
By MARC SHAPIRO

The finest actor with whom director Renny (*Prison*) Harlin has ever worked pads out to the gravesite set of *A Nightmare on Elm Street 4: The Dream Master*.

Harlin, whose trip down Elm Street is barely a week old, signals the cameras to roll. Jake the dog lifts his hind leg and lets loose with an April shower on the hallowed ground where the remains of Freddy Krueger lay buried. Jake's execution of his part in the pivotal Freddy dream/resurrection sequence is faultless. Directors being the perfectionist breed of cat they are, the canine must do it again.

"That was great, Jake," coaches Harlin, "but can we get one more?" Jake obliges, even when "one more" turns into many more. Harlin is finally satisfied. Jake gives the director his paw and walks off.

"I've never worked with a more accomplished actor," chuckles Harlin. "That dog would have pid-



Krueger tries to bribe Alice (Lisa Wilcox) into being his prom date.

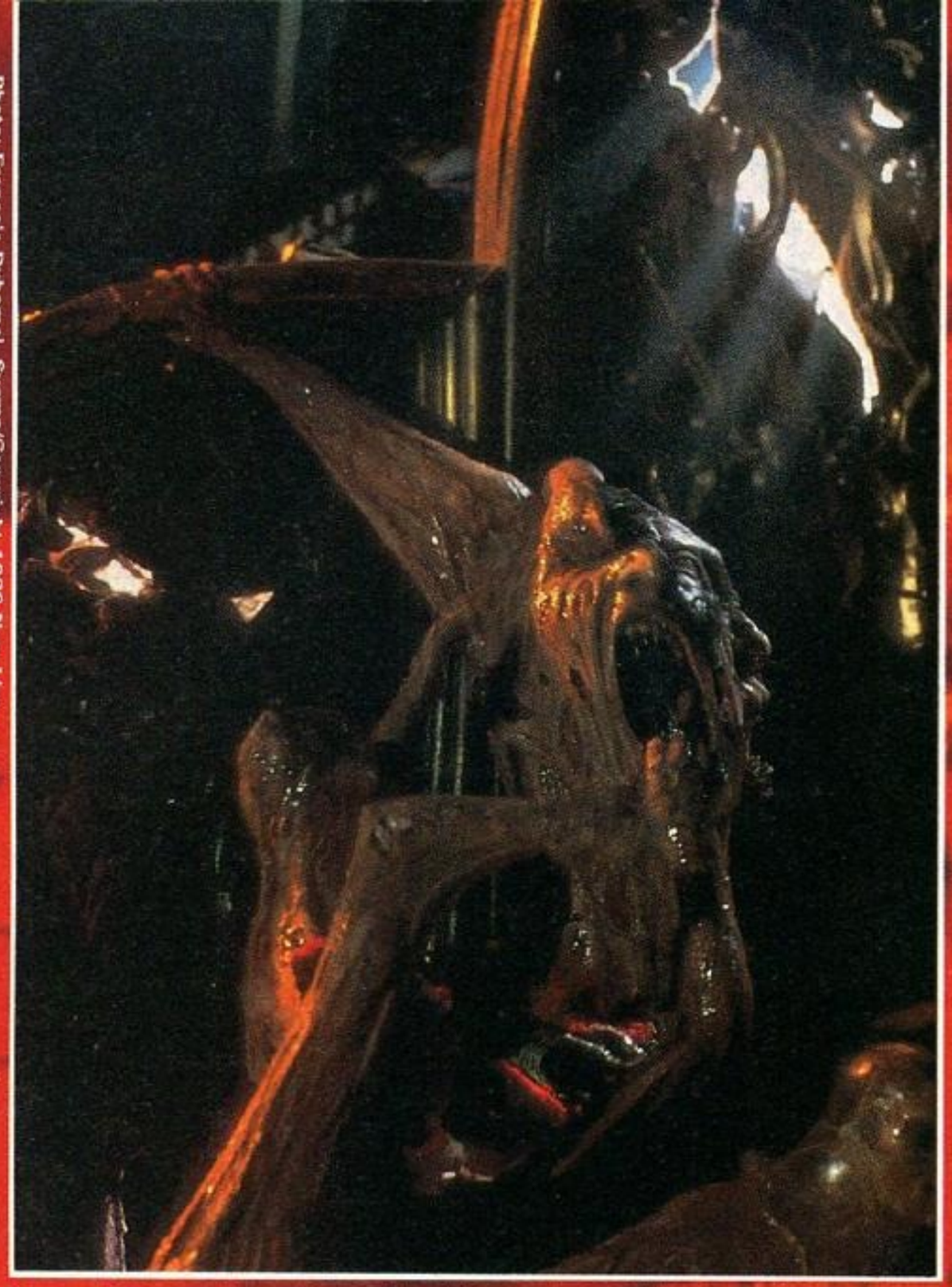


Photo: Francois Duhamel, Sygma/Copyright 1988 New Line

Since *Dream Warriors*, Mr. K has taken up impersonations. Here he does the Blob.

"I did not come onto this picture real excited. But when I saw those scenes cut together, I knew we had a gem."
—Robert Englund

dled on that spot all day, if we asked him to."

Harlin punctuates his statement by taking a bite out of something disgusting with bread around it, which passes for breakfast. Outside Harlin's office, adjacent to the soundstage/warehouse in an industrial district within spitting distance of the Magic Mountain amusement park, another day on the *Nightmare 4* set creaks into motion.

Producer Rachel Talalay walks around *Dream Master* central, doing what all good producers do best: looking worried. Crew members with hammers pound on a mock-up of a school nurse's office that will provide the jumping-off point for this day's major Krueger capers. The production's still photographer Gary Farr, a former combat photographer who made a cameo appearance in *Salvador*, regales this correspondent with tales of real-life atrocities.

"I'll never forget the day I came upon that village," marvels Farr matter-of-factly. "There were bits and pieces of bodies all over the place. . ."

Thanks, Gary. Anybody want a slightly used Egg McMuffin? Farr's stomach-churning tales are interrupted by the appearance of Robert Englund walking through the soundstage in a dress. In a *dress*? Say it ain't so, Joe! The master of menace showing leg and Dolly Parton-sized hooters? Horror of horrors, the dream killer has cleavage! What a drag!

"That's right, Fango readers, I'm sitting here in this makeup chair, picking mascara out of my eyeballs," hisses Englund, adding insult to injury in his trailer. Dressed as a school nurse with as close as we've ever seen to the true Englund face in a *Nightmare* film, Freddy appears tired and a bit spaced out. He launches into his "automatic pilot" response to playing Freddy almost before the question is asked. Risking the wrath of Krueger, we inquire whether the fourth time is turning out to be the charm or a curse.

"I'm going to be honest with you," warns Englund. "I did not come onto this picture real excited. I was still putting the finishing touches on *976-EVIL*, and because of changes in this film's start time, I had to turn down some interesting television and film work. I was a little weary of the whole thing. I had the feeling, when we were shooting the scenes in the junkyard, that my timing in playing Freddy wasn't right. But when I saw those scenes cut together, I knew we had a gem going here."

Englund's muted enthusiasm is shared by other *Nightmare 4* cast and crew members. The consensus is that *The Dream Master*, owing to Englund's involvement in the upcoming *Freddy's Nightmare* TV series, may be the last *Nightmare* film for at least two years. A rumor (fueled to some degree by Englund) ventures that this will be the last *Nightmare* film to star Englund as Freddy. Whatever the truth of the matter, everybody indicates they're going the extra mile to make this the best *Nightmare* ever.

Jim & Ken Wheat's script picks up where *Dream Warriors* left off. Freddy's back (by way of the aforementioned dog whiz sequence, in which the urine will be replaced by fire) and systematically kills off surviving Elm Street kids Joey (Rodney Eastman), Kincaid (Ken

Sagoes) and Kristen (Tuesday Knight). The world's dreams seem hell-bent for terror when a sweet young thing named Alice (Lisa Wilcox) arrives on the scene, complete with all the Dream Warrior powers rolled into one. Armed and dangerous, Alice and Freddy do major league battle.

The movie, budgeted at approximately $5 million on a 40-day Los Angeles shoot, is an FX extravaganza, including a *film noir* bit in which one lady teen titan is turned into a cockroach and stomped by Freddy. Heading up the FX team are Krueger's main makeup man Kevin Yagher, Chris (*Critters 2*) Biggs, Steve (*Dead Heat*) Johnson, late arrival John Buechler and Screaming Mad George.

But even with the promise that *Nightmare 4* holds, Englund concedes that the Elm Street series has, to a large degree, reached a point of no return. "The *Nightmare* films are not just Fango films anymore," he says. "I'm proud of the fact that the Fango fans, the punks and the heavy metal kids were the grass roots audience that made these films a hit, but it would be unfair to claim them as the only fans now. *Dream Warriors* broke the series through to a more mainstream, across-the-board audience. In a sense, they've almost become family films."

And in a sense, the third segment also made Freddy much less scary. Freddy wisecracked a lot more often and would almost have to be considered more the hero of the film than the villain. The overriding fear among genre addicts is that the *Nightmare on Elm Street* films by now may not be scary anymore.

"If Renny had directed *Dream Warriors* instead of Chuck Russell, I don't think you would be making that statement," responds Englund. "Don't get me wrong—I'm proud of Part 3, and Chuck did a marvelous job. Renny, however, has an eye not only for the rollercoaster ride but for the sick, offbeat, sexual and creepy as well. *Nightmare 4* is cute like the previous film, but it's also a return to the creepiness of the first two."

As if to illustrate the point, Englund takes a talk break, dons a wig, glasses and nurse's cap and flounces over to the soundstage. On deck is a scene where a school nurse, comforting Kristen after an encounter with the dream world, turns into Freddy.

Harlin is already inside the cramped mock-up, counseling ac-

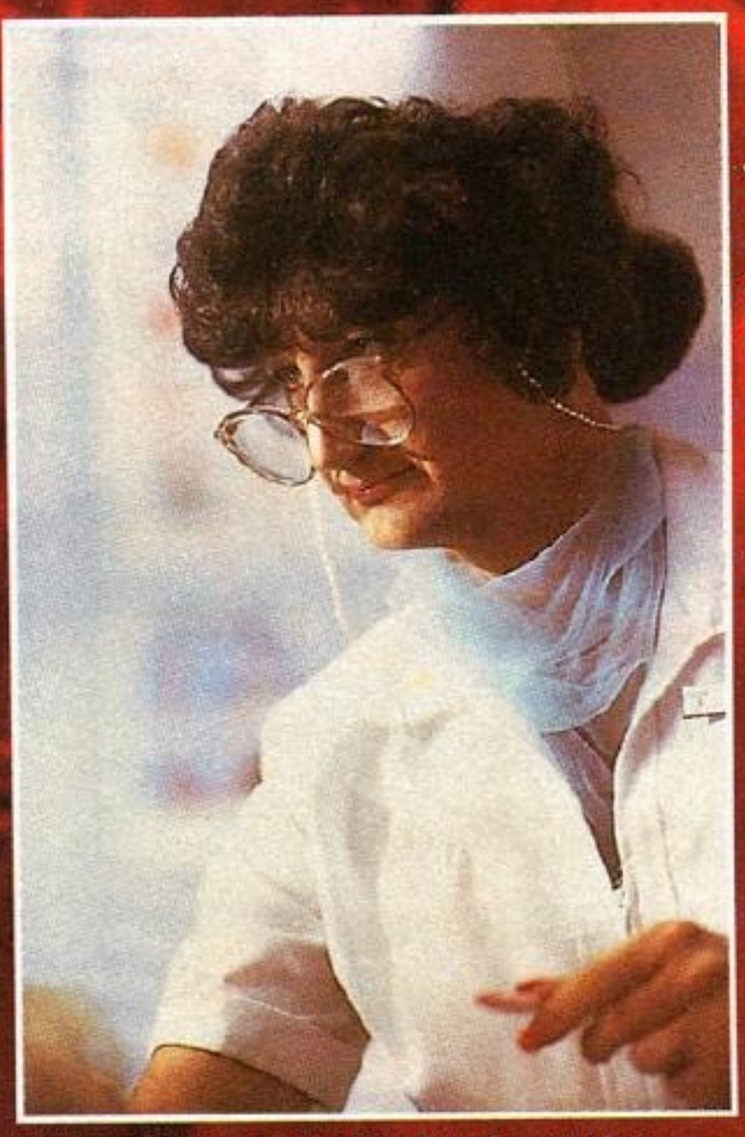


Photo: Gary Farr/Copyright 1988 New Line

Cute nurse, but check where the thermometer's been, OK?

Photos: Gary Farr/Copyright 1988 New Line

Midway through *Nightmare 4*, newcomer Toy Newkirk is attacked by the robot from *Lost in Space*.

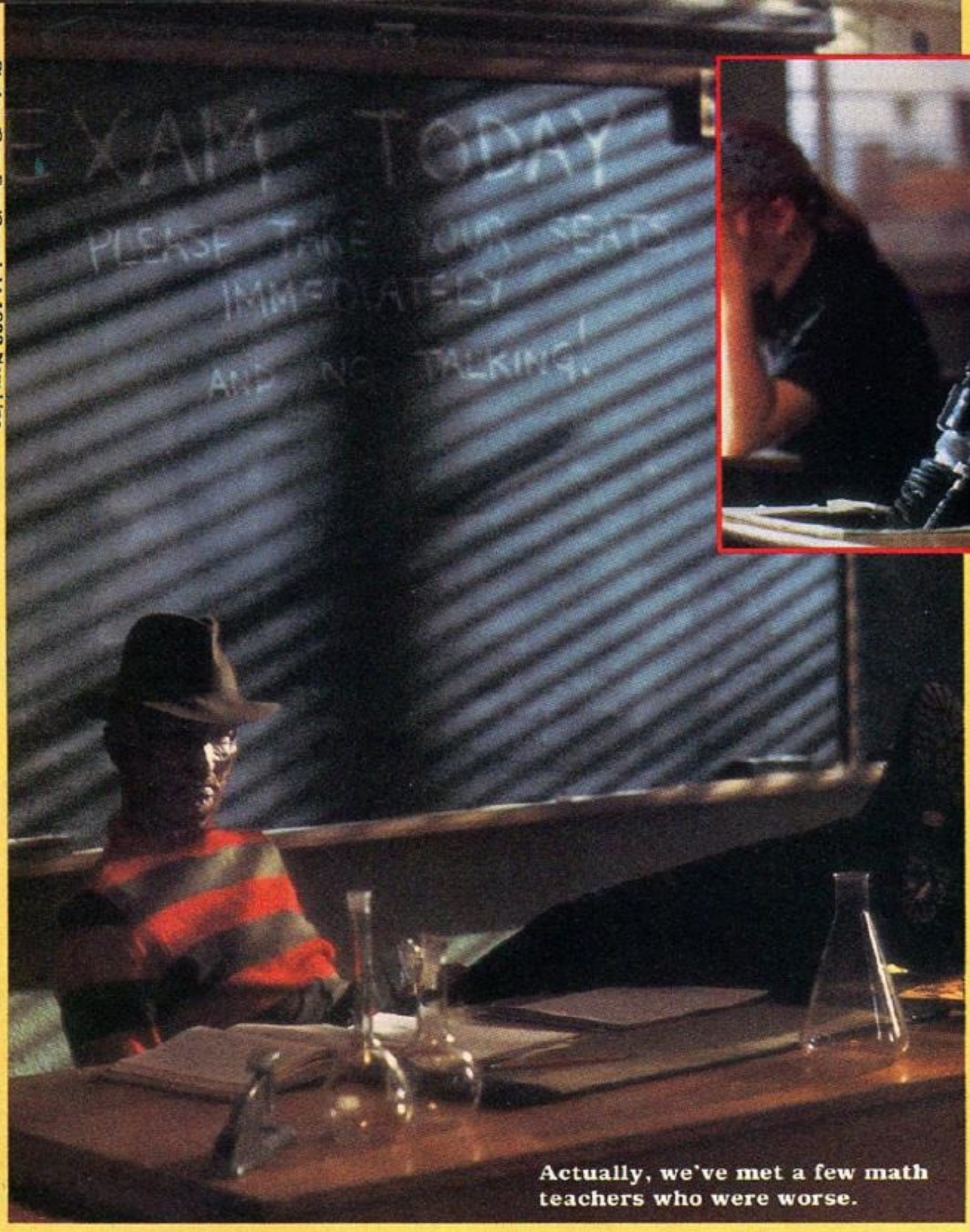
discovered that our feelings about the character of Freddy and the series were very similar."

Harlin, whose debut on these shores was that red, white and blue bit of jingoism called *Born American*, claims he's going for a more stylish approach to *Nightmare 4*, but he laughs off the idea that this will be the *Miami Vice* of the series. "What I'm attempting to create is an arty action rollercoaster," explains Harlin. "I'm trying for the nightmare quality of the first film and the action quality of the third."

Harlin, like just about anybody who has emptied an ashtray on this outing, is very aware that the Freddy character has evolved since his first appearance in 1984. The director sees the '88 model Freddy Krueger as a James Bond/Rocky kind of folk hero.

"We've reached a point where the audience sees Freddy as the hero," he reasons. "They come to these movies to hear his funny lines and to see him do those amazing things. And because of that popularity, I'm faced with showing Freddy in a more heroic light and giving him more screen time. People will still fear him, but they will also be cheering him on."

An opportunity to both cheer and fear Freddy presents itself during a restaurant scene between Freddy and Alice at the Crave Inn (the film's token homage to Freddy creator Wes Craven, who sat this *Nightmare* out). Alice has just settled into a booth when up pops Freddy (in regulation grubbies this time), who quips, "If the food doesn't kill you, the service will!" At that moment, a waitress arrives on the scene with a pizza. Alice looks at it and screams. In place of the expected anchovies are the faces of previous Freddy victims. Krueger quips, "I just love soul food."



Actually, we've met a few math teachers who were worse.

tress Knight on how to move upon an examination table. The beginning of the scene, using an actress for the real nurse, has already been shot. Englund enters to a chorus of wolf whistles. The actor places himself over Kristen as Harlin calls for a quick run-through.

"There now, you've had a nasty fall," coos Englund, "you've got to lay still."

Freddy completes the statement and slowly runs his hand down the length of her body. With that sequence's portion in the can, members of Peter Chesney's FX team, armed with a long plastic tube and a huge syringe, hustle onto the set. The syringe, containing a monster load of blood and attached to one end of the tube, is hidden off camera while a crew member fastens the other end under Freddy's dress.

At the director's signal, the action picks up at the tail end of Freddy the nurse's body rub. He turns away from the table and distorts his face as blood splotches spread across various parts of Englund's dress whites.

Renny Harlin was picked to direct *Nightmare 4* when somebody caught the Finn's act at the helm of the atmospheric *Prison*. Harlin claims that he cemented his relationship with his dream killer charge in a less formal setting. "Robert and I had a number of meetings in a number of different bars," confides the director. "We had some drinks together and

Brooke Theiss' new workout coach assists her in some stretching exercises.

Rachel Talalay has grown up on the *Nightmare* films; she's gone from accountant and location manager on the first to producer on the fourth. Who better to chart the rise of Freddy's adventures and how the films might be softening with age?

"I knew there was something special about the original *A Nightmare on Elm Street* because just reading the script scared me," Talalay remembers. "But you never think a film is going to be as successful as that one was. It was a big surprise."

Talalay also recalls that when *Nightmare 3* broke the series through into a more mainstream arena, it necessitated much discussion of what to do with a fourth film. "We debated a long time on how to do Part 4," she reports. "Did we want to do a small, really scary film and go back to the film's roots, or did we want to continue to do a rollercoaster ride laced with comedy? Originally, we decided that to try and make it scary was more important, but we ultimately felt that since the audience was so familiar with Freddy and would be harder to scare, it would be better to go with the same feel that the third had."

The producer admits that Freddy's sudden leap from core horror fame to a more widespread audience has resulted in many heated, not to mention strange, discussions. "Telling Freddy's past history has become a ticklish situation," she reflects. "We're attempting to softpedal his history as a child molester even though we realize that, since our audience for these films is expanding, we have to talk about it every once in a while. We've also had to decide how gory and violent these films should be. We've had effects sequences where what color goo was to be used, and whether we should show blood, and how much, were serious topics of discussion. We've modified a lot in *The Dream Master*."

This fine-tuning hopefully hasn't resulted in the films' losing the impact they once had. "The scares are there," Talalay promises. "So is the rollercoaster ride. We may quite possibly be losing something by going this route, but I think we've gained something, too."

"Hey! You're wrecking my church model!" cries co-production designer Mick Strawn as your reporter accidently lays his tape recorder on a priceless sculpture. But Strawn (who, with sister C.J., also worked on *Nightmare 3*) doesn't get ugly about it and instead explains why working on Elm Street is such a gas.

Photo: Francois Duhamel, Sygma/Copyright 1988 New Line

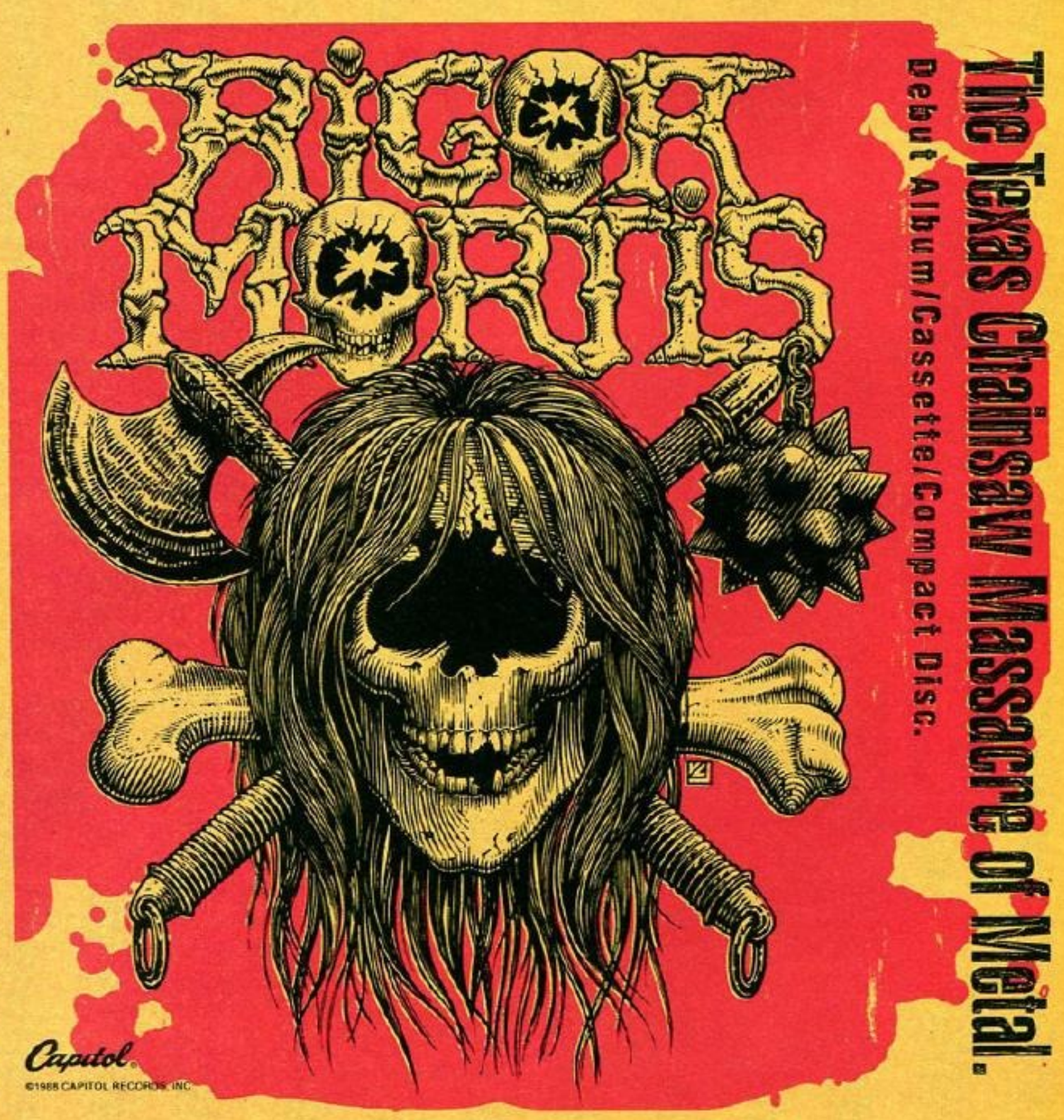
Freddy gets all the best girls, like Tuesday Knight, who fills in Patricia Arquette's shoes as Kristen.

"You can basically do whatever you want with these movies," he enthuses. "We're dealing with almost nonstop big and small gags. This time we even built the Elm Street house from the ground up."

Strawn goes into the particulars of a couple of gags. He cites a forced perspective set in the fabled cockroach stomping sequence as something that allowed him a creative stretch, and the borrowing of some tricks used in the old TV series *Land of the Giants* for that and other sequences in need of larger-than-life sets. "The neat thing about this film is that everything we do is designed to work within and to help along the story line," Strawn notes. "These are not just effects bits thrown in to shock, they're an integral part of what's going on."

Nearby, Englund finally finishes the insert shots for his bloody nurse scene. But a dream killer's work is never done, and as long shadows begin their march across the sound-

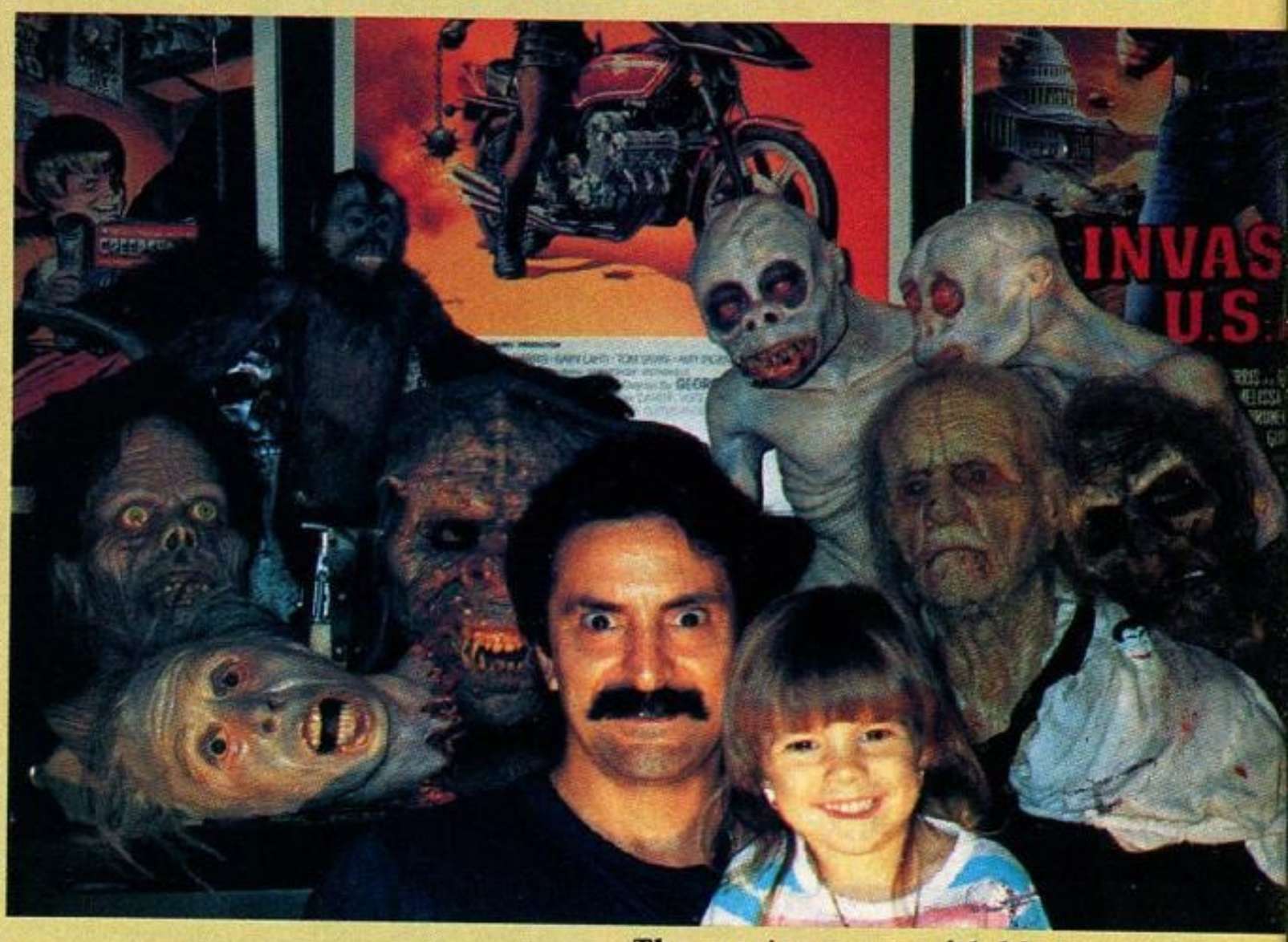
(continued on page 68)



SAVINI SHINES

A one-to-one interview probes the FX master's mind about Romero, reticence and the importance of, uh . . . well, read the article.

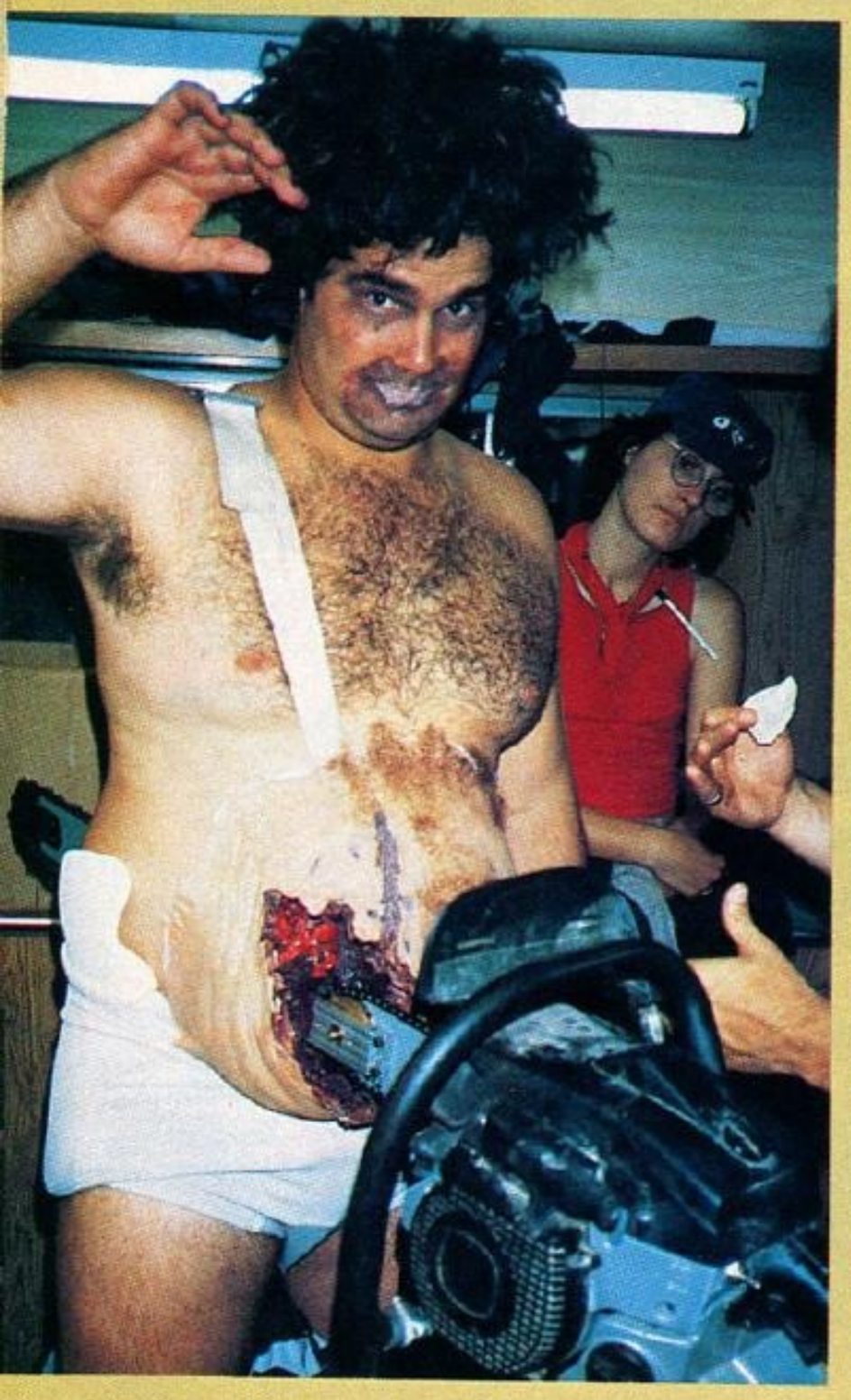
By DAVID KUEHLS



The master poses with his greatest creation yet, daughter Lia.

When we last talked with Tom Savini (Fango #56), the FX specialist had just begun work on Texas Chainsaw Massacre 2 *and was excited about it. He was also up for the director's job on Stephen King's* Graveyard Shift *and seemed excited about that, too.*

Now, almost two years later, Savini doesn't get too excited about Chainsaw 2 *anymore. But he is thrilled at the prospect of directing* Graveyard Shift. *(Hey, in this business, you take the good with the bad.) Savini junkies can also get their fix from the new Dolph Lundgren actioner* Red Scorpion, *directed by Joseph (*Friday the 13th—The Final Chapter*) Zito.*



This interview takes place on the Pittsburgh set of George Romero's Monkey Shines: An Experiment in Fear, *where Savini helms FX. Sporting a full beard and dressed in a bright green sweater, khaki trousers and tennis shoes, the multifaceted horror great tinkers with a piece of hand armor ("part of my 'Black Knight' Halloween costume") and expresses his disappointment that this reporter failed to bring any fresh copies of Fango with him. Instead, a dusty copy is taken off one of the shelves and passed around the room to set the mood.*

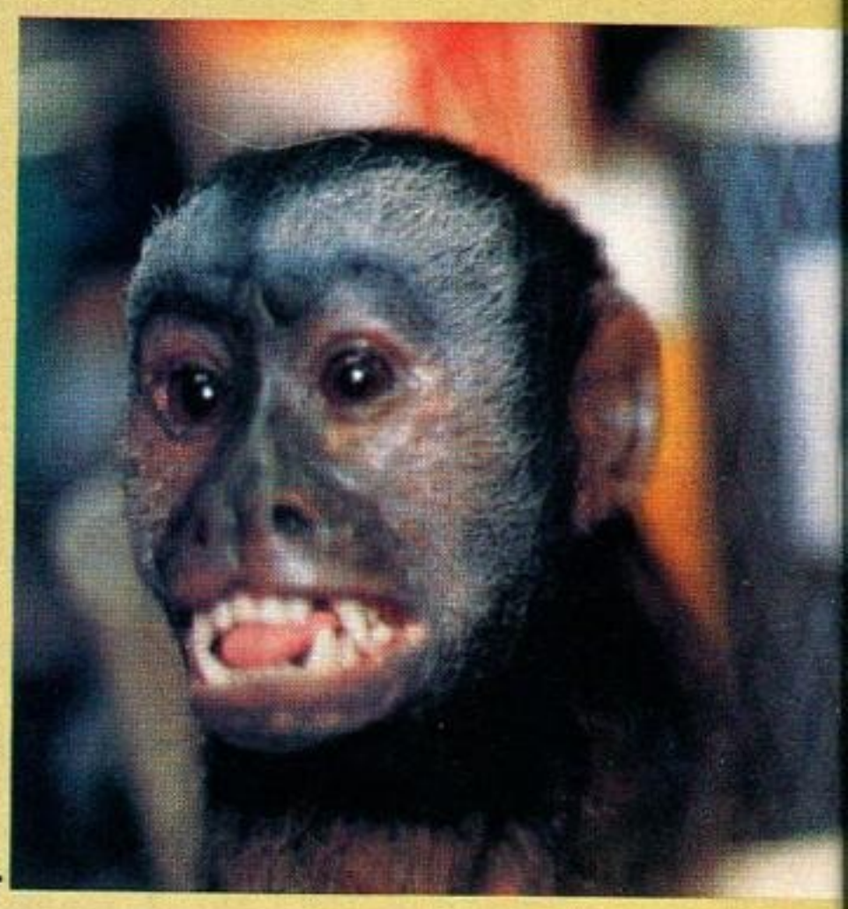
FANGORIA: Let's get right down to it: What, if any, blood and guts can Fango fans expect in *Monkey Shines*?

Tom Savini: Well, there's the brain operation, a sequence with an actress where they've opened up her head. They're testing certain parts of her brain with a probe and she has various responses to it. So we did a brain operation. Later on, the hero [Jason Beghe] either nightmares or envisions the same brain operation happening to himself. So we did the same exact brain operation happening on the guy. There's a back operation, but it's very subtle: A scalpel cuts the back, it bleeds, and that's it. We made a fake hypodermic needle. We had a fake monkey hand with a retractable needle stabbing people, and a real monkey running around with a real needle. The film will have a combination of those shots. That's about it for the gore.

Fang: So *Monkey Shines* is a big departure from the splatter films?

Savini: Well, yes. But I haven't done a splatter film since—let's see, which came first, *Friday the 13th—The Final Chapter* or *Day of the Dead*? Well, *Invasion U.S.A.* was splatter. Hmmmm.

During the *Chainsaw 2* shoot, Savini finds an ingenious cure for diaper rash.



You see, I hate it when they call them splatter films because they don't realize how much sculpture and mechanics go into that stuff. "Splatter" to me sounds like, "OK, let's throw some blood on the wall, or make something explode and throw blood on the wall." But *Texas Chainsaw Massacre 2* was definitely a splatter film, I would have to say. Yeah, I forgot about that one.

Fang: You mean you'd *like* to forget about that one. What happened to that film?

Savini: I don't know what they did to it. They cut out 40 percent of the effects we did. The editing was incredibly bad. And they released it unrated, which means they could have put anything they wanted into it, but they left so much out. I mean, if you *can* release a film unrated, wouldn't you put everything you could in?

Fang: Just what did they leave out?

Savini: A whole underground garage scene where a chainsaw gets a guy right across the face. Another guy's hand is cut off. It quivers on the floor and goes into a position [*indicates flipping the bird*]. Someone picks it up and it's stuck there. Just stuff that would've given it a little more personality. My impression of *Chainsaw 2* is that after the first 20 minutes—which were scary—you just watch a bunch of weirdos talk for two hours. Great makeup, the old grandpa makeup and the platehead, but you already saw those guys, so OK, let's see them *do* something.

I don't know. The whole thing with that movie was really strange. I don't know how that stuff happened or why.

Fang: You've directed three *Tales From the Darkside* episodes. Do you have a favorite?

Savini: "Family Reunion." And "Inside the Closet." Actually, it's a toss-up between "Family Reunion" and "Inside the Closet," I liked both a lot.

Fang: So did I. The scene with the foot hanging out, on the side of the bed, is everyone's nightmare.

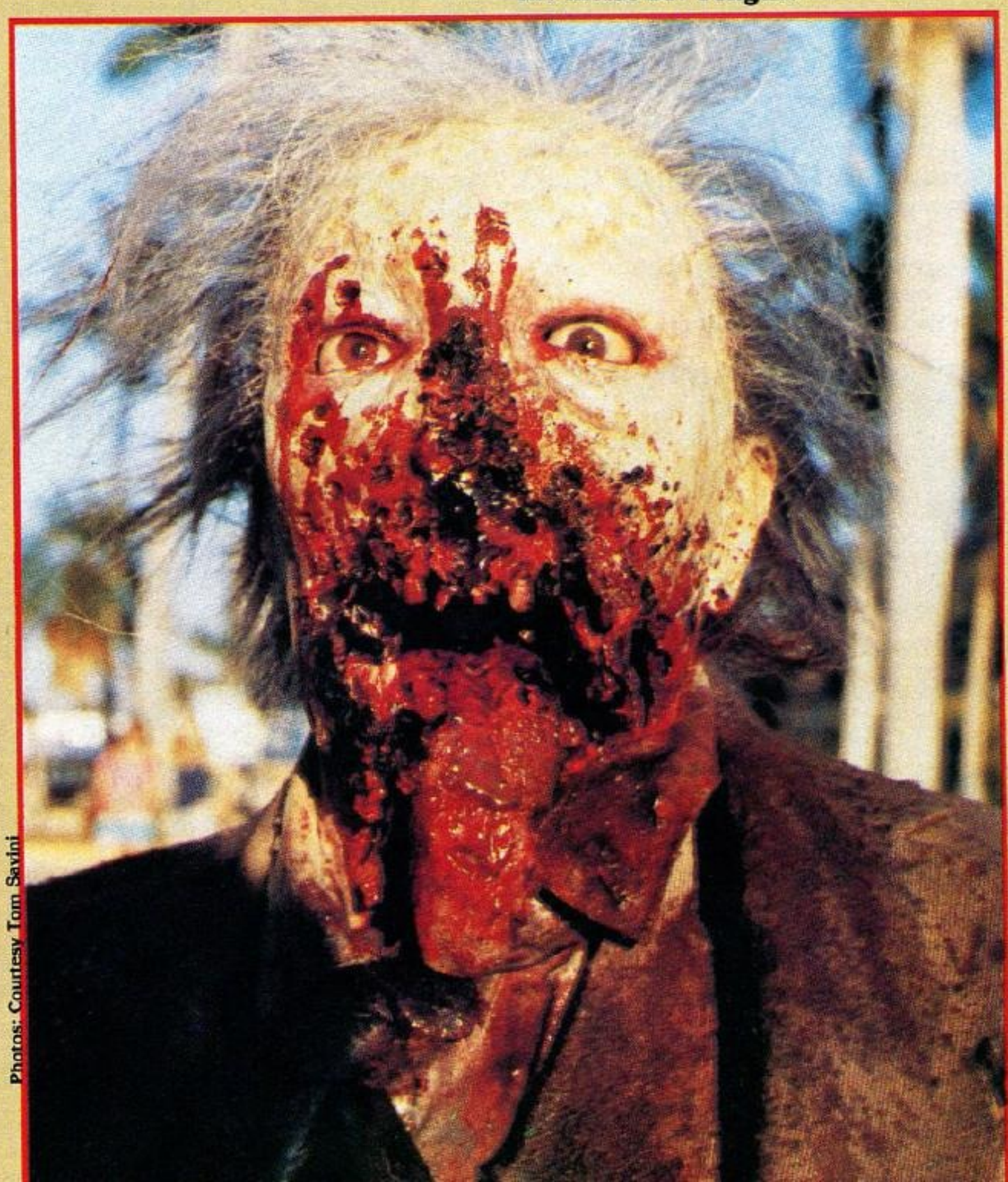
Savini: Symbolically, it was nakedness out there in the unknown,

Photo: Courtesy Everett Burrell

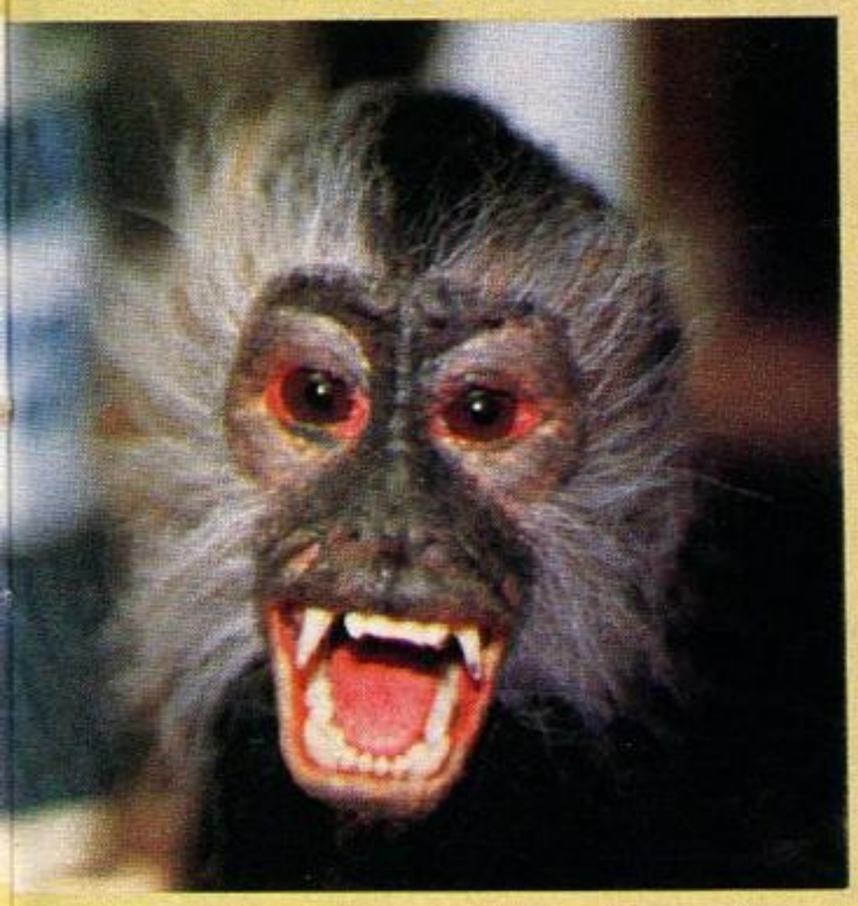
Savini assistants (left to right) Mike Trcic, Greg Nicotero and Everett Burrell monkey around between takes. (Not pictured: Greg Funk)

"Maybe this is going to sound weird coming from me, but the less you show, the better it is."

***Day of the Dead* underused one of Savini's greatest zombie puppets, the moist Dr. Tongue.**

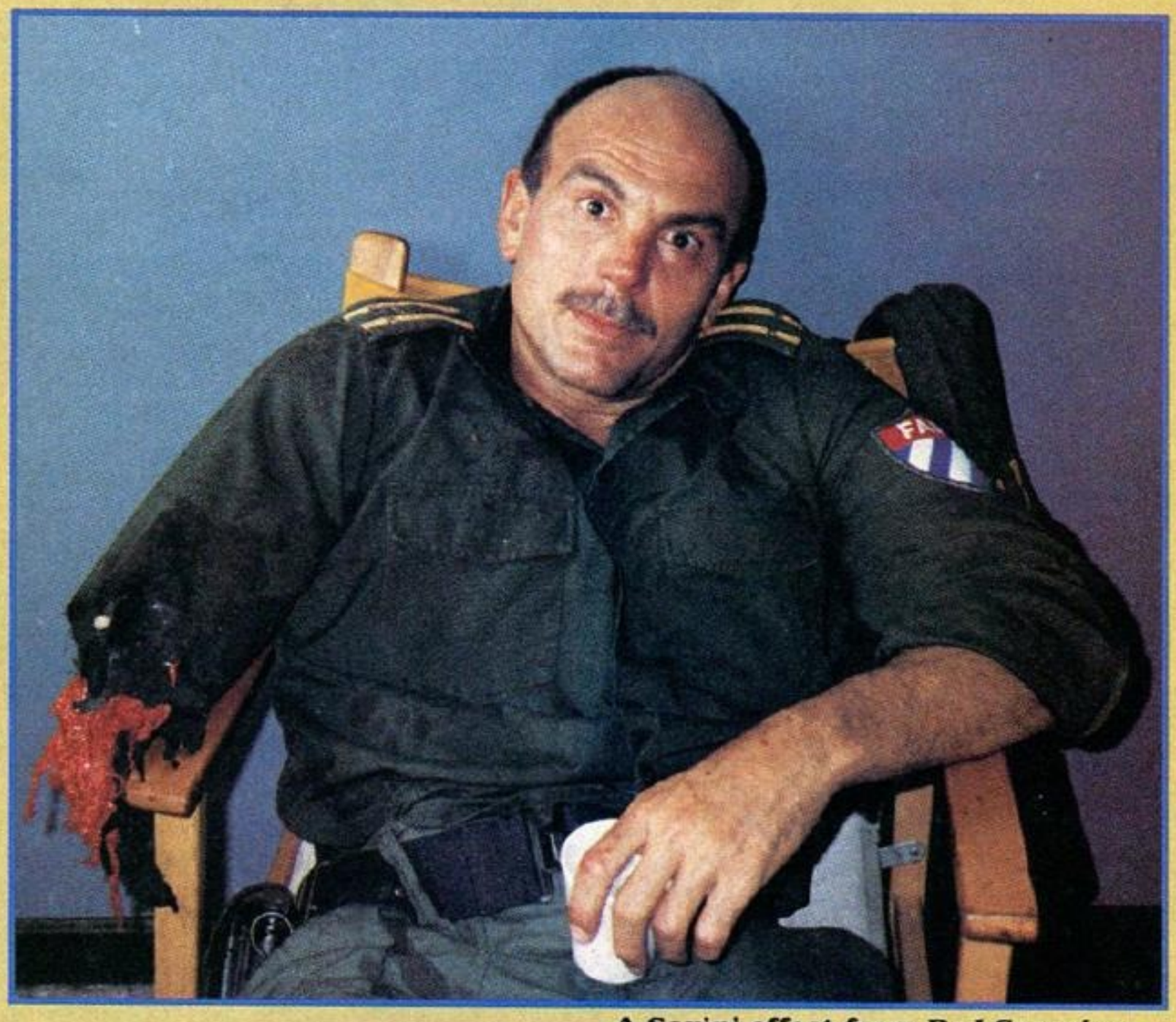


Ella's stunt doubles finally get the recognition they deserve.



Photos: Courtesy Tom Savini

Savini is so proud of this Halloween makeup that he asked us to run it in color. No problem, Tom.



A Savini effect from *Red Scorpion*: At least soldier Carmen Argenziano won't have to salute anymore.

faced with terror.

Fang: What feature films will you be working on in the future?

Savini: No one knows about this yet, and you should check back with me before you print this interview, but I just signed a contract with New World Pictures to direct a movie sometime during the next two years. It will probably be Stephen King's *Graveyard Shift*. I really can't say any more, for personal reasons.

Fang: Did you like playing the Creep in *Creepshow 2*?

Savini: I've spent a lot of my time making other people up. It's a pretty sticky mess; I hate getting that stuff on me. But I only had to do it for one day. I got real creepy. My daughter was there, and she saw Daddy getting made up as a monster. So it was fun, thinking back on it. I always knew you went through shit when you got made up, but I hadn't realized just how much.

I always hated it. I always knew I hated it. You see, *my* nightmare is getting that glue all over—between your fingers, under your neck, behind your knees. It's amazing how you can put your brain on hold. I just sat down, I was ready, they did it. I didn't even think about it until it was over. Makeup started at 2:00 a.m. It took seven hours. Everett Burrell applied it, sculpted it, designed it. We were finished with my scenes by 2:00 p.m., so it wasn't a long day.

But I had to get out of it on location! I didn't want to wait to be driven back to the hotel. I actually took a shower in the trailer, a cold water shower, just to get it off. I could not *wait* to get it off! If I had to sit there and wait for my next scene, it would have been really uncomfortable. But they concentrated just on my stuff that day.

Fang: Did you do any of the FX for *Creepshow 2*?

Savini: I didn't do any of the effects. That's a big misconception. I get letters from fans about that, I get asked at conventions about it. I had nothing to do with the effects on *Creepshow 2*. The effects man was fired, and they hired some of my previous assistants—Everett Burrell, Howard Berger, Greg Nicotero and Mike Trcic—to finish the job.

Fang: Will you be doing the FX for *Apartment Living*?

Savini: I don't know what's happening with that movie. Yes, they want me to do the effects, and Romero will direct, but they're still looking for financing.

Fang: Any future David Letterman

All the screaming in the world didn't stop the makers of *Chainsaw 2* from cutting these fake heads.

show appearances on tap?

Savini: Every time I get enough new stuff to take on, they invite me. Last time I was on, which was the fifth time, I kind of took everything I had and used about a third of it on the show. Now, after this movie, I'll have another load of stuff.

Fang: Do you get along well with Letterman?

Savini: Yeah, for what we do, we do it OK. He doesn't see anything until we're on the air. Then we pull back the covers, and it's a surprise.

Fang: Since your first crack at directing a feature-length movie will be an adaptation of a Stephen King story, what did you think about King's first crack at directing, *Maximum Overdrive*?

Savini: They made a big mistake on that one. In the ad previews for the movie, King is standing there saying, "I'm going to scare the hell out of you." Well . . . what a challenge. People just sat down and said, "OK, I dare you." And that's not a good attitude for your audience to start with. It's like on the *Creepshow* poster, they said it was a "very scary movie," and I hated that because, again, it gets up people's expectations. But the movie was good and scary.

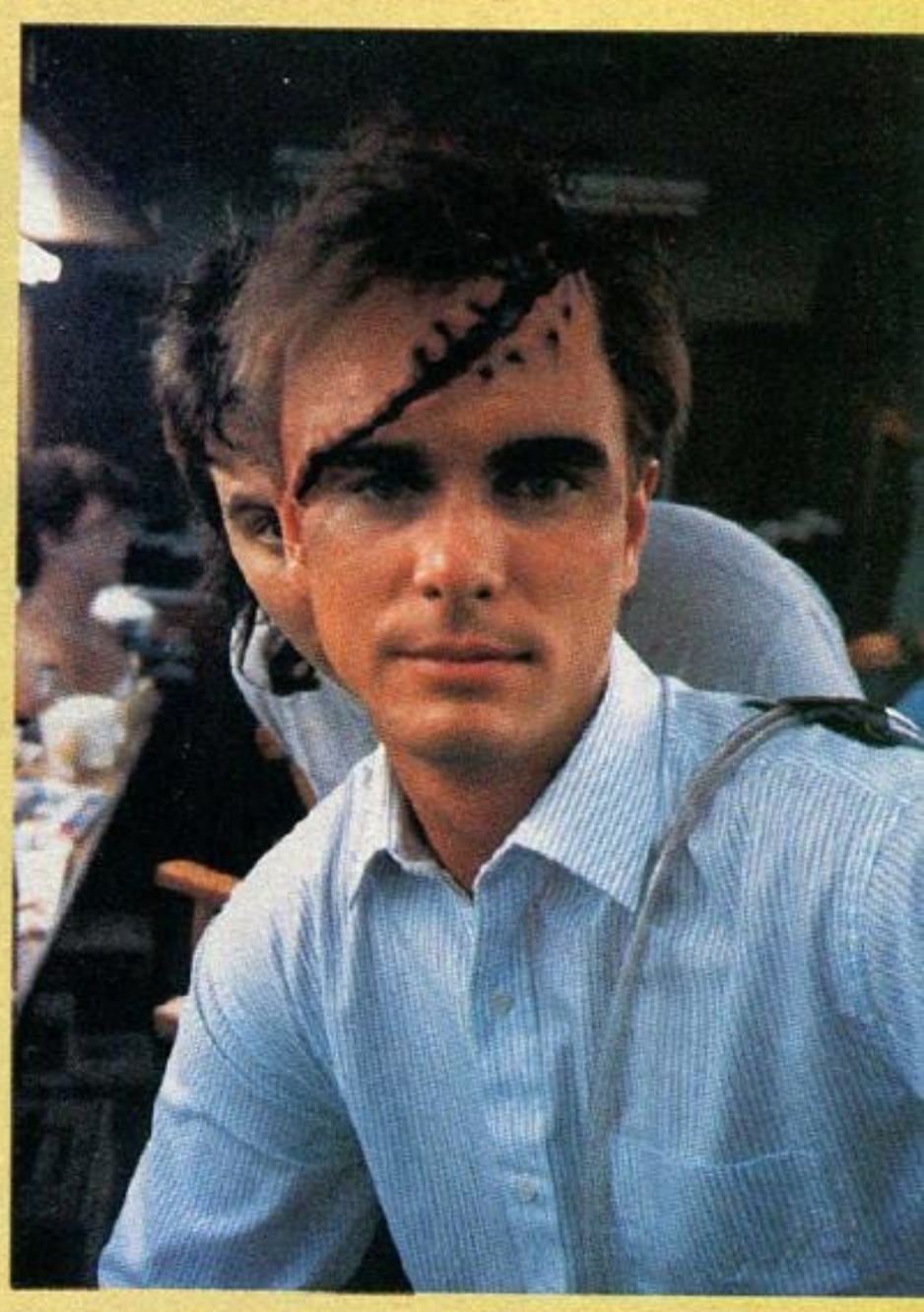
Fang: Did you enjoy Clive Barker's directorial debut, *Hellraiser*?

Savini: I didn't like it. I liked the effects, but talking as a director, the idea of opening a box and having lights appear and strange people—phooey! When you ask people to believe in the supernatural, they either tune in or out, and half of them tune out. Then you've lost them. I'd much rather do a story in which you keep as much of the audience involved as possible.

The Princess Bride to me is one of the greatest movies I've seen in a long, long time. Other people look at it and say it's so stupid, so corny. But so what? It had that feel of the old movies—Burt Lancaster in *The Flame and the Arrow*, *The Crimson Pirate*. You know, everyone thinks that Tom Savini doesn't like something unless there's blood and gore. That's stupid. My favorite movies are love stories, and something like *Alice in Wonderland*, the cartoon, is a wonderful movie.

Fang: In light of what you just said, how would you go about shooting *Graveyard Shift*? As an old-fashioned movie about killer rats?

Savini: It depends. I read this book by William Goldman called *Adventures in the Screen Trade*. What he says to do is, before you start a movie, put the whole essence of the movie into one sentence. And my sentence for *Graveyard Shift* would not even have the word "rats" in it. The rats are secondary to what's going on in the story. It has to do with

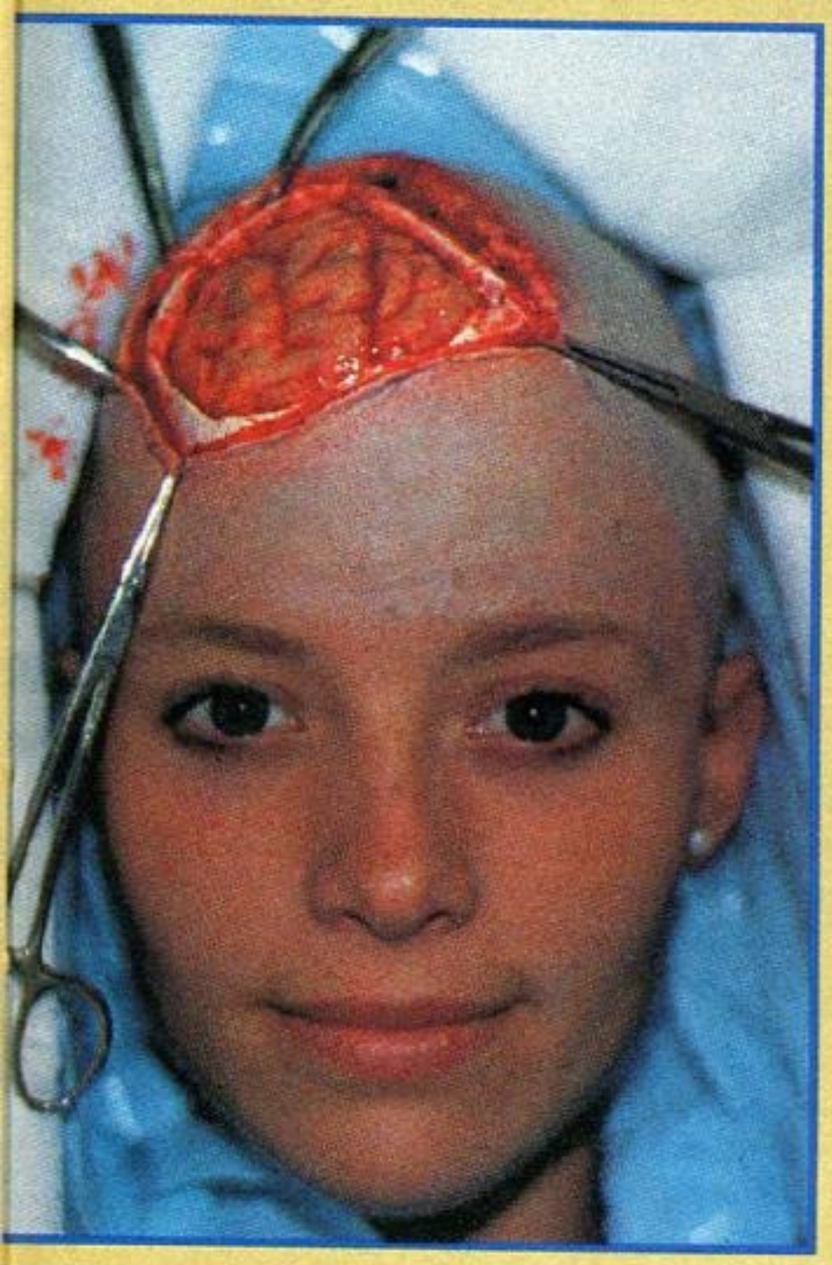


This Savini *Chainsaw 2* effect—badly edited in the film—gives new meaning to the phrase splitting headache.

"If you *can* release a film unrated, wouldn't you put everything you could in?"

security and love and complexes. Adolescence, you know, all the problems teenagers have. But if a story lends itself to shooting in the old style, then I'd sure like to incorporate that.

To me, we go to the movies to feel, to identify with the characters and to go off on adventures with them. To forget our problems. There're a lot of reasons why we go. The style—how you shoot the thing—is where the emotion comes through. You ever see *Lolita*? James Mason shoots Peter Sellers. Now, there's many ways Stanley Kubrick could have done the scene. Mason could've walked in, Sellers could've begged Mason not to shoot him, and then Mason could've shot him dead. A quick, three-second scene. But in the movie, Mason keeps shooting Sellers, and Sellers keeps saying, "Ohh, that hurts." It lent realism to the scene. And then Sellers crawled behind the painting, and you see the bullet hole appear in the portrait, and then you hear Sellers' body fall behind it. Your imagination did all the work in that scene, and that stuck in the mind so much more than if he shot him—*boom!*—and he's dead.



Actress Stacy Foster is all smiles now, but wait till she sees the final print of *Monkey Shines*. Savini's brain surgery scene got cut.

Fang: So you're saying that in horror movies we should have more people dying off camera? How would that apply to, say, *Dawn of the Dead*?

Savini: No, *Dawn of the Dead* needed to have people dying graphically. What George Romero wanted to do was to make people numb to the violence. I mean, halfway through the film, heads were flying and you *were* numb to it, as was his point.

I might have done some stuff off camera. Maybe this is going to sound weird coming from me, but the less you show, the better it is. Because the audience completes it, and the audience always makes it more violent in their minds, more graphic than we can create with our effects.

Fang: You want to go back to the days of Val Lewton, where the horror was just hinted at?

Savini: Unfortunately, you cannot get away with that totally today. The audience *wants* to see it. And the reason they want to see it is that we've been showing them more and

(continued on page 64)

Sultan of Spheres

Tall Man Angus Scrimm takes a break to shoot the breeze with *Phantasm* creator Don Coscarelli.

Director Don Coscarelli dishes up "Phantasm II" and makes some shocking discoveries about how times have changed.

By MICHAEL GINGOLD

It's been nine years since Don Coscarelli's low-budget shocker Phantasm *established itself as one of the most bizarrely imaginative horror films ever, as well as the first of Avco-Embassy's string of thriller hits. Unfortunately, Coscarelli's follow-up, the 1982 sword and sorcery effort* The Beastmaster, *was plagued by creative interference, and it was five years before he directed his next film, the as-yet-unreleased* Survival Quest.

Fango spoke with Coscarelli two weeks before the opening of his sequel Phantasm II, *and he talked of the project with great enthusiasm.*

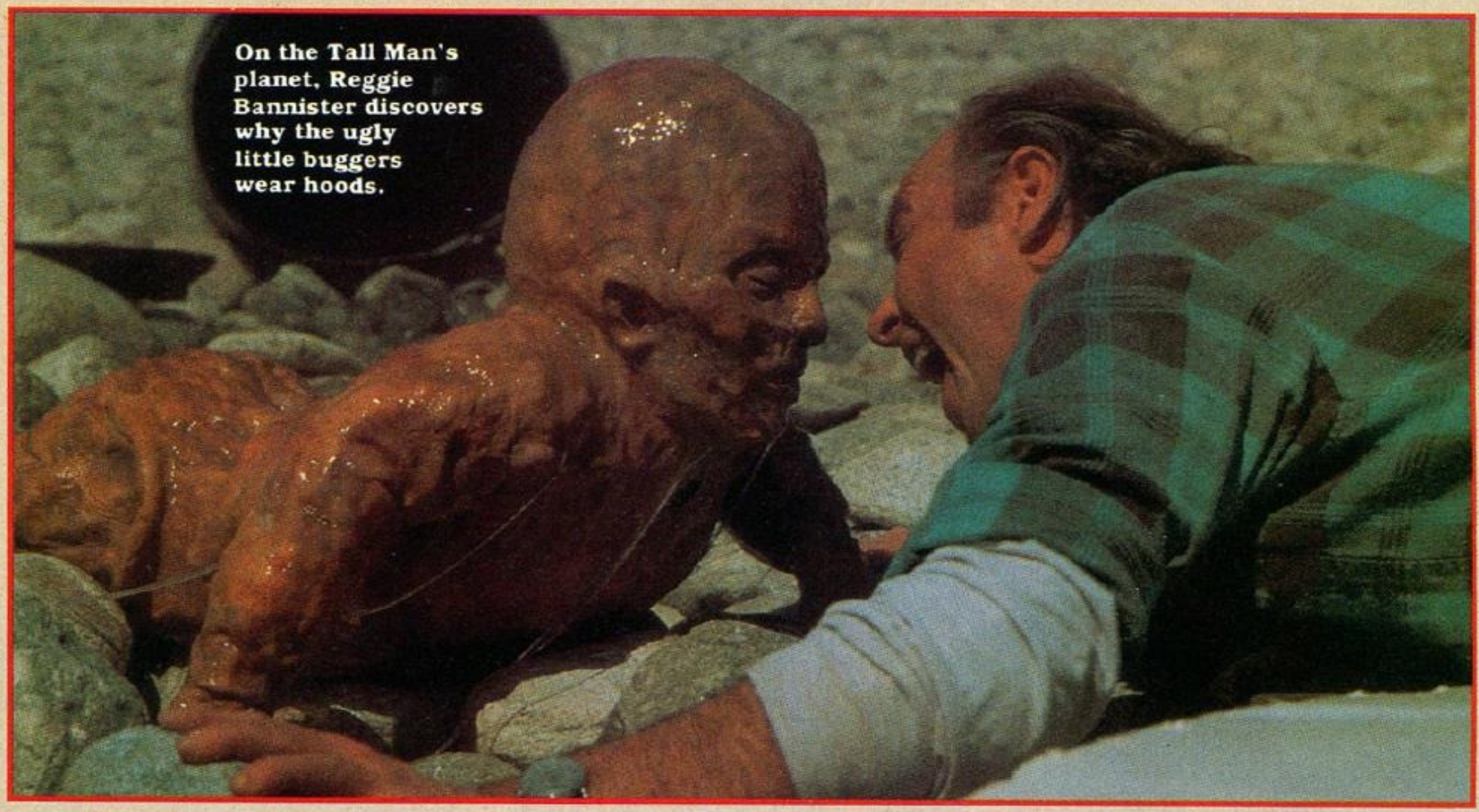
FANGORIA: Why has it taken so long for a *Phantasm* sequel to come around?

Don Coscarelli: There were a lot of reasons. First of all, I was very young when I made the first one, and I had this intention of going off and doing other things. The response to the first one was so dramatic at the time that I was inundated with all these horror-type offers, and I really decided that I wanted to try something different. By the time I got back around to it, what happened was that I actually got a little sidetracked; I wound up writing what will become the third installment. I decided it was a little too big to go for in the second film, so I came up with a story to fit in between the two. And that added on a year to the project.

Fang: The producer of the film, Robert Quezada, was established before as a cinematographer on movies like *The Unseen* and *Frozen Scream*. How did he become involved with producing *Phantasm II*?

Coscarelli: Well, he's been a loyal collaborator of mine for quite a number of years. On the original *Phantasm*, he got the credit of "visual consultant," but he basically photographed the picture. He did the lighting, though I eventually took the camera credit. He was really instrumental in the original picture's look, and since then he's worked on my other films in varying capacities.

He's really worked his way up from the grass roots, so to speak, and he knows film backwards and forwards. He brought this film in for $2.7 million. The challenge is



Phantasm II Photos: Peter Iovino/Copyright 1988 Universal City Studios

always to deliver the goods for the price, and over the years, we've learned some tricks and found some areas where you can take risks. Sometimes it pays off and sometimes it doesn't.

Fang: The sequel's budget is much higher than the original's. Did that allow for more FX?

Coscarelli: Yes, definitely. Of course, I don't want to denigrate the first picture just because the budget was low. The lower the budget, the more freedom you have. I mean, you make a movie like the original *Evil Dead*—or the original *Phantasm*, for that matter—and you can do a lot, just as long as you have the time. You don't have as much pressure as when you have a big budget.

But I think the effects are vastly superior in this one. For example, when the spheres are flying, we were finally able to do a point-of-view of what the sphere is "seeing," and optically do it right. We go to the Tall Man's planet and really do a number there, and the makeup effects are a vast improvement, because we had real pros doing them.

Fang: What were some of the FX highlights?

Coscarelli: For starters, the dwarves. In the original film, they were just little guys running around in hooded outfits, and now we've really perfected what they look like. Now they're much more ferocious. We've got a couple of good scenes where they really clamp down on people.

And the sphere stuff is much more a part of the film. In the first one, it just sort of came and went. Everybody got excited when it first came on, and then it never really came back. But in this film there are three spheres: two of them like the original, and then another one that was nicknamed "Rambosphere." It starts where the others leave off. We were much more detailed in terms of the spheres in this one. Whereas in the first one we had in total three different versions of the sphere to get the different flying effects, in this picture we had about six models of each sphere. We did some wire flying, which wasn't quite successful, and we had some optical flying, of course, and then we had some where we resorted to our old trick from the original, where we would throw the ball and film it in reverse. That was actually one of the more effective ways to get the thing to fly. It's low-tech, but it works great.

"I found out that the ratings board reads FANGORIA."

Fang: Did the new film have to have

The original *Phantasm* singlehandedly made Coscarelli a brand name genre attraction.

This poor guy thought he could steal the role away from Angus Scrimm. Tough luck, fella.

cuts done on the FX for an R rating, as the first one did?

Coscarelli: First of all, we didn't have to cut the first picture. Back then, somehow, we lucked into an R rating. We sent it over, got an X, and then they changed their minds after we did some persuading. Now, with the sequel . . . First off, I'd like to tell you some interesting things. One thing I found out, and this may be kind of a scoop for you, is that the ratings board reads FANGORIA.

Fang: Really? What do they think?

Coscarelli: I don't know, it was just that one board member said he had seen the article on *Phantasm II* in Fango. One thing they did tell me, is that since the first *Phantasm* was released, the times have changed and so have the morals of America. Consequently, what was acceptable then is not acceptable now, in terms of viewing blood. Evidently, they're giving in more now on sex and language, but when it comes to blood and guts, it's no go. They pointed to the most recent *Friday the 13th* as an example of something they had demanded changes on.

As far as cutting *Phantasm II*, we got an X immediately, and the problems we had was that Universal liked the picture so much that they moved the release date up to July 8, so there was no time to do an appeal. Ultimately, what we had was a sphere scene that was pretty much a recreation of the one in the first film, and they objected to that tremendously. It had all the flowing blood, just like the first one. We tried a strategy where we cut it exactly, frame for frame, like the first one, and we said, "You gave that one an R, so give this one an R." But they wouldn't buy it, so eventually we did have to make some cuts in that scene. It's a little more tame, but we did do some other things in the film which are on the edge of what they will allow. I'm not sure they'll be happy when they see the final film.

Fang: There was quite a bit of reshooting done on *Phantasm II*. Did this involve the FX sequences?

Coscarelli: Well, my way of working is to shoot film right up to the last possible minute. Whenever I budget a picture, I like to have a chunk of money hidden away that I can go back and use to make adjustments once the film is assembled. This one was no different, and luckily I was able to keep the money hidden until I needed it. Many times it's the effects, or you'll need an extra shot or some bit of coverage, or you might want to change the way a character plays a scene. I just love to go back and shoot, shoot, shoot. We stopped principal photography on day 45, and ultimately we may have shot 95 days.

Fang: Did the studio order any of the reshoots?

Coscarelli: Well, I wouldn't say they ordered anything. Jim Jacks, who's one of the vice presidents of production over there and was really the driving force behind this project, had a lot of opinions on where we should go and what we should do. At one point, for example, he suggested that we open the picture up just a

Phantasm II spheres built by Steve Patino

The sphere digs in . . .

bit, because we were just going from small town to small town. He wanted a couple of epic shots, so we picked up those.

Fang: So *Phantasm II* is sort of a road movie?

Coscarelli: Basically, the Mike character from the first film has spent the last eight years in a mental hospital, and he lies to get out of the place. He recruits Reggie, and it does become sort of a road picture as the two of them go after the Tall Man. What they find as they drive through Northwestern America and go to the small towns are places that the Tall Man has been and gone. And he leaves little traps for them—ectoplasmic land mines, I call them, like the spheres.

. . . and spits out . . .

. . . and spits out some more.

Fang: They go from town to town fighting spheres. You could call them "Ball Busters."

Coscarelli: Yeah, exactly. [*laughs*] Or maybe "Dwarf Busters."

Fang: How would you describe your working relationship with Angus Scrimm?

Coscarelli: It's good, and we hang out a lot between films. He's quite the antithesis of his screen presence. He's a refined, intellectual gentleman, and a lot of fun to be around. He has a lot of interesting opinions on subjects that are totally divorced from horror films. Angus will really go the extra mile. He's one of the most disciplined and concentrated people. When he puts his mind to something, he can really do it. and he's a real partner in the effort, because in the years since the last picture came out, he's really lived the Tall Man thing, with the fans contacting him and all that.

Those years really paid off in the sequel, because we really got a fix on what the audiences like about him and how rabid they are about him. At the previews, when the cards come back from the audiences, he's always the number one-rated actor. There's a quality to him that I can't quite put my finger on; he's not campy, not taken in fun at all like Freddy or someone like that, but there's something about him that audiences love to hate.

Fang: Speaking of Freddy, it seems that the original *Phantasm* was the first modern horror film to exploit the clash between dreams and reality. Do you feel that it might have started this trend?

Coscarelli: Well, we did come out long before any of those other ones, and you can certainly see a comparison, but I'm really not one to judge those sort of things. It's up to the audience, really.

Fang: Is there a strong possibility that *Phantasm III* will happen?

Coscarelli: I intend to do it, though the financial requirements are going to be a bit more substantial. I've got the script in pretty good shape for the next sequel. It's going to be a bit of a change, more apocalyptic in nature, and there's going to be an industrial mortuary, handling 5,000 corpses a day.

Fang: There have been several horror sequels out this year, and they've been mostly disappointing. What do you think makes *Phantasm II* stand out from the others?

Coscarelli: It delivers the goods! Since I was a kid, I've seen advertisements telling me that something's a horror film, and I get there, and it's not scary or interesting or imaginative. This film is scary; we had a sneak preview that went through the roof.

Another thing is that most of the people who did those other sequels did them for the money, which was not the case with this one. For $2.7 million, we're not "in the money" yet. I had a lot of people working on this picture who've paid a lot of dues and are ready to make their big break. Mark Shostrom's done a lot of great work, and he's ready to move into the Rob Bottin and Rick Baker category, and the same can be said for Roberto Quezada, cameraman Daryn Okada, and all these guys who've been around for a while. *Phantasm II* is going to be a vehicle for all of us.

"I intend to do *Phantasm III*. . . there's going to be an industrial mortuary, handling 5,000 corpses a day."

TO BUILD A BETTER BLOB

Remakes of '50s classics don't get away with dripping Jell-O around dollhouses. Just ask FX maestro Tony Gardner.

Part One

By BILL WARREN

Incredibly enough, in the heart of Hollywood, half a block from Hollywood Boulevard itself, in a former auto-repair shop right near a huge mural depicting Hollywood legends, a monster grew in the first half of 1988. The place swarmed with workers determined to make a mass of goo seem alive and menacing. This was the Blob Shop.

Originally, Lyle Conway was in charge of the FX, but he left the production when principal photography was completed; DreamQuest, out in Simi Valley, took charge of the miniature FX, so Tony (*Return of the Living Dead*) Gardner, a slender guy who looks about 15, found himself with a load of responsibility running the Blob Shop as head of the makeup crew.

On the day he shows this correspondent around, we are joined by Frank Darabont, co-writer of the movie, who has yet to see the Shop himself. Scattered around are dozens of pink-and-purple things, Blob fragments. There's a giant phallic extrusion of the Blob lying

Tony Gardner (left) and Brian Wade touch up his collapsing Vicki effect.

on top of the office, twisted like a tree trunk, pink shot through with blue. Gardner barely gives it a glance; he has seen it every day for months. It's not going to be used now.

Though the script was detailed, Gardner admits, "I had to come up with my own interpretation of the Blob, which was a—well, it sounds stupid, but it's like a giant, inside-out vampire stomach. It's got a strong acidic content, it dissolves organic material. Instead of just having everything go, I thought it would be more interesting to have things go by degrees. Synthetics are harder to dissolve, for instance; metals don't dissolve, they get shiny, as if they'd almost been dissolved. At the end, where it's at full-strength and it bumps against somebody, they turn into this translucent pile of goo with white hair. It's an immediate reaction at that point."

After a drink across the street, where he proudly shows off hundreds of alarming production photos, Gardner takes his visitors on a tour of the Blob Shop. A word of caution: If you have not seen *The Blob* yet, stop reading right now. Put this magazine down, hide it from yourself until you've seen the film. *Surprises are about to be given away.*

You'd suppose that the Blob is a mass of goo, perhaps moved by gravity, as in the original, on tilted sets. But what the Blob Shop used is a real surprise: silk injected with gravy thickener. "Noelle Eischer and Marilyn Dozer have really come up with what the Blob is, a combination of methacil and silk that's controllable and keeps its shape," Gardner reports. "They're calling it a Blob Quilt. Methacil is a food additive; they used it in the first *Blob*, too. You can mix it to any consistency, so you can really make it do what you want. You can make a thick glob, where you go like that [shakes his hand] and it never comes off, or you can make it real runny. To fill up bags of fabric, you obviously have to make it a little thicker, so that it keeps its shape. Then you can coat the surface with a thinner mixture."

"Jack H. Harris told us that the original Blob was largely a half-inflated weather balloon," Darabont

A portrait of the artist with a Blob-ravaged lawman.

"Oh, sure, I'll autograph that copy of GOREZONE #1 for you," says this Blob victim coverboy.

Blob Photos: Marsha Blackburn/Copyright 1988 Tri-Star

A libidinous teen pays the price for fondling a sweetie on their first date.

adds, "covered with silicone gel, which at the time was brand-new."

Silk bags of gravy goo? Yes. "Besides the movement of the whole Blob," Gardner continues, "you've got smaller surface movement, because these little sacks are smushing around next to each other from their own weight." Gardner picks up a Blob Quilt-to-be. "The only difference between these and the miniatures DreamQuest uses is detail in the size. They started out playing with goo and ways to control it, then realized that if you made a big silk bag and filled it with goo, you could roll it around and it would keep its shape."

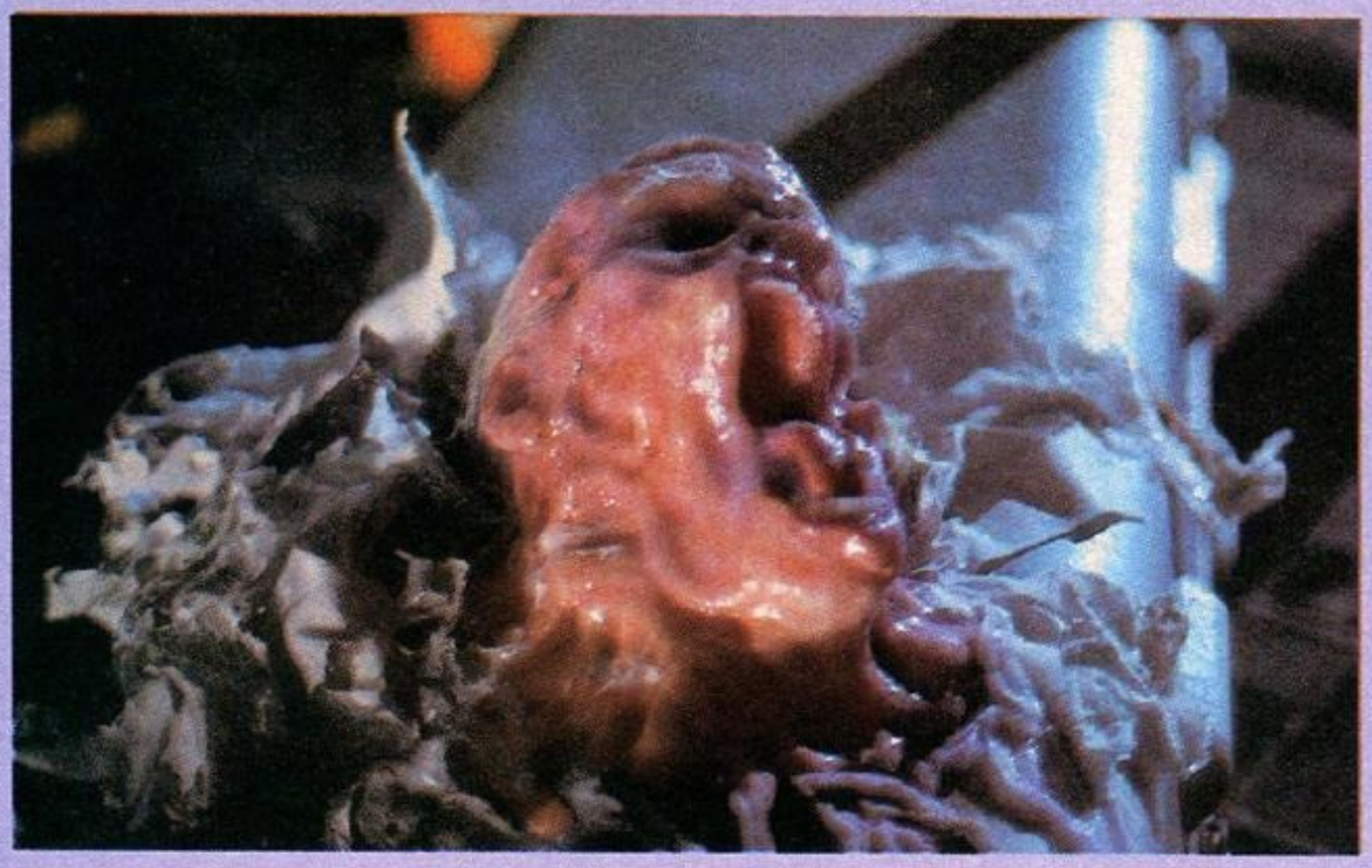
He moves on, then has a bright thought. "This idea, the silk-and-methacil Blob Quilts, was like the Blob itself, which starts out small and grows. The concept started out small and single-celled, and grew."

"As her face collapses, you get a sense of the Blob rising under her skin, then her whole face caves in."

There are about 30 people working in the Blob Shop Operations, including Brian Wade, Steve Frakes, Cindy Sercelj, Mike Smithson, Evan Brainard and the appropriately-named Todd Chaney. Tony Gardner put the shop together in standard fashion. "A lot of the people I hired were ones I'd worked with before, and we knew we all got along together. I'm kind of out there steering things around, and everybody's been involved in what they want."

The Blob Shop was literally divided into two camps. Gardner waves his hand down the room's length. "At the beginning, a white line was drawn down the middle of the shop. This side's for creature effects, the other side's for makeup effects. That division is kind of still there, though it's become a little more of a cohesive group. It's nice. Moldmaking for the entire shop is in the back, mechanics is almost at the back. Creative department for Blob stuff is over there, and the paint department is in the front behind the black vinyl curtain."

Sewing machines whirl and buzz along the left wall, a young woman feeds pink-and-purple fabric to the needle. "Over here they make those quilts, two Blob fabrics sewn together with the top layer being the thinner of the two, sewn on bunched up so it can be injected with



Yet another aspiring hero blows his chance to be Steve McQueen in the action-packed remake of *The Blob*.

methacil. It's full of pockets and sections riding on top of each other."

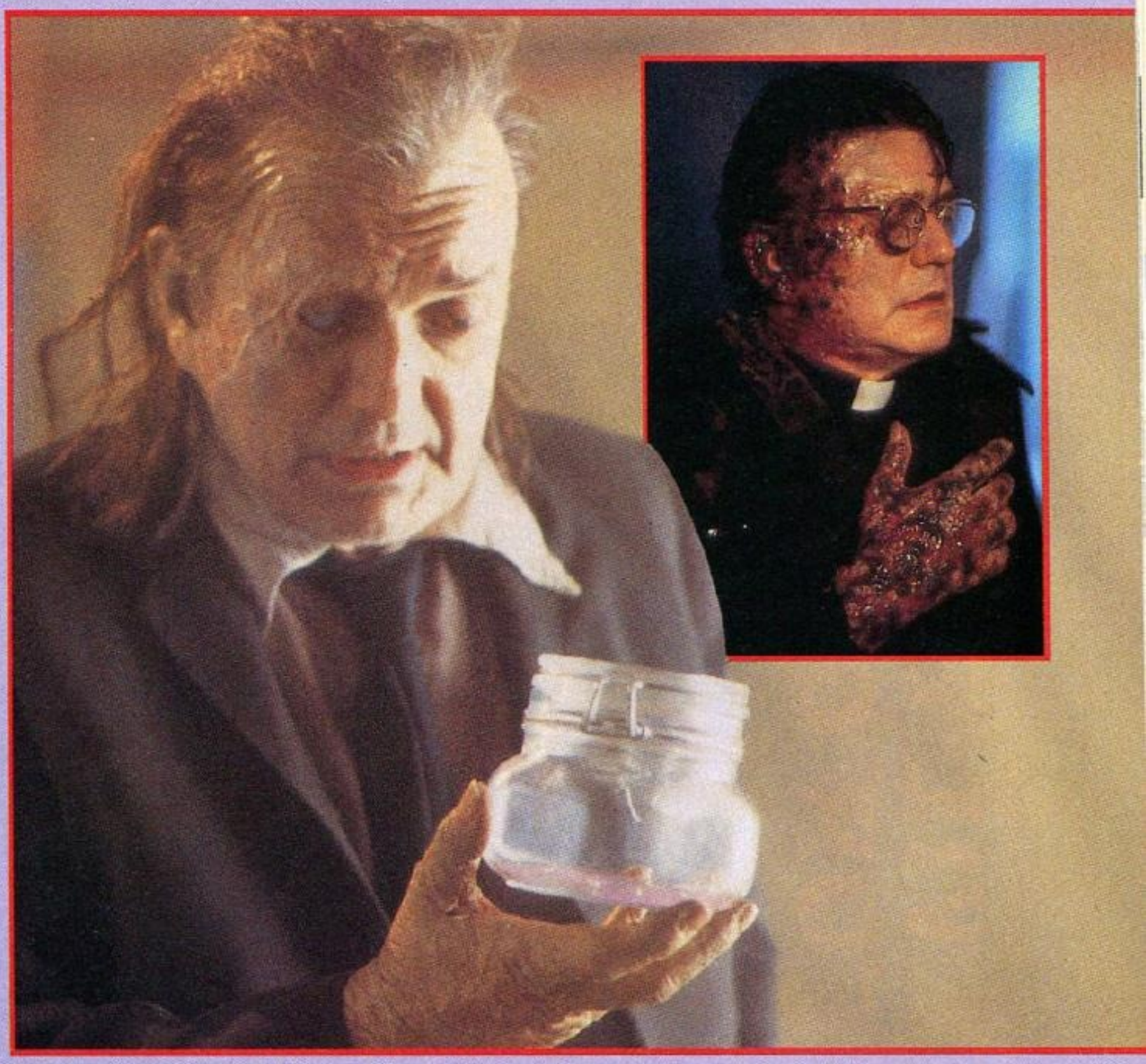
When making a hard-to-believe movie like *The Blob*, you need an early scene that will make the audience sit up in surprise, with a "Hey, these guys mean *business*" reaction—a "money shot," as they're often called. And the remake aspect required a plot development that indicated that not everything was going to go as it had before. So Russell and Darabont misled audiences into believing that a particular actor had the Steve McQueen role—and then killed him early in the action. "Our *Psycho* gag," Darabont calls it.

With Conway's departure, this sequence, which everyone called "The guy in the Blob," fell into Gardner's lap with very little time to prepare. "Originally," specifies Gardner, "I was just supposed to do the makeup end, which was the four stages of the guy and the arm on the floor. And on a Tuesday, they said, 'All the live-action elements shoot next Monday. We need you to figure it out.' So six of us did it in six days."

Gardner describes the scene he had to do: "A man is alone in a room, right after the Blob has killed its first victim, and it drops from the ceiling onto him. The heroine enters and sees a mass on the floor. She doesn't know what it is, and it suddenly uncurls, and it's him. He reaches toward her, but can't talk, because the Blob has sealed off his mouth. She grabs his right arm, the only thing free of the Blob, and tries to pull him out. This whole time, we cut to different angles as he's slowly dissolving. Then his arm separates at the elbow. She flies back, hits the wall with his arm in her hand. His arm goes flying. The last end of the Blob pours out the window."

The scene had to be spectacular and convincing. Some of it was done in miniature by DreamQuest, but most of it was done full-size, and this was the responsibility of Gardner and the Blob Shop. Gardner explains his overall concept of this important scene. "My goal here was to come up with something transparent, because so far the Blob was still babyish in that it was new and hadn't sucked in that much blood, so it hasn't turned that red yet. So my big thing was trying to make it totally transparent as the effects start, then get pinker and pinker and pinker."

Gardner and his team brainstormed the idea, showing director Chuck Russell various videotape tests as they worked out the kinks in the goo. "It's a lot of techniques dealing with Plexiglass, vacu-form plastic, clear vinyl bladders, vinyl hosing,



Del Close's Reverend Meeker looks better with his burns (inset) healed up, but we're not sure we trust him with a jar of Blob.

different pieces on different rotating rigs, shifting rigs that stretch and pull, so you get a sense of everything moving within, a sense of mass pulling back. This is mounted on a platform that moves back at the same time, so that it looks like the Blob's pulling away."

Gardner points to a metal framework, a seat with a sloping platform behind it and two offset pipes jutting up. "He sat here," he demonstrates. "One arm was supported on this post, and the other hand was on the other one. Blob stuff was draped over the whole thing, and we had pneumatic bladders on top of that. Then we had 'the shroud' on top of that; it was a flexible, thin transparent skin. It gave us the basic understructure and coloring. Under that, there was also the shirt itself, with bladders under that. On the head there was a wig with bladders, and underneath it all was one of our workers, who matched the real actor in size. On top of the shroud went a layer of nylon tricot in a vein texture, in pinks. And then on top of that went a piece of silk fabric with another piece of silk fabric sewn to it like a quilt. It had blue streaks painted into it, so where the blue overlapped the red, it would make purple. Purple would jump out for a second. Those were pulled off his back at different rates in different directions, so you had the sense of a vein pattern moving and a sense of the bulk of the Blob moving, and there was color shifting at the same time.

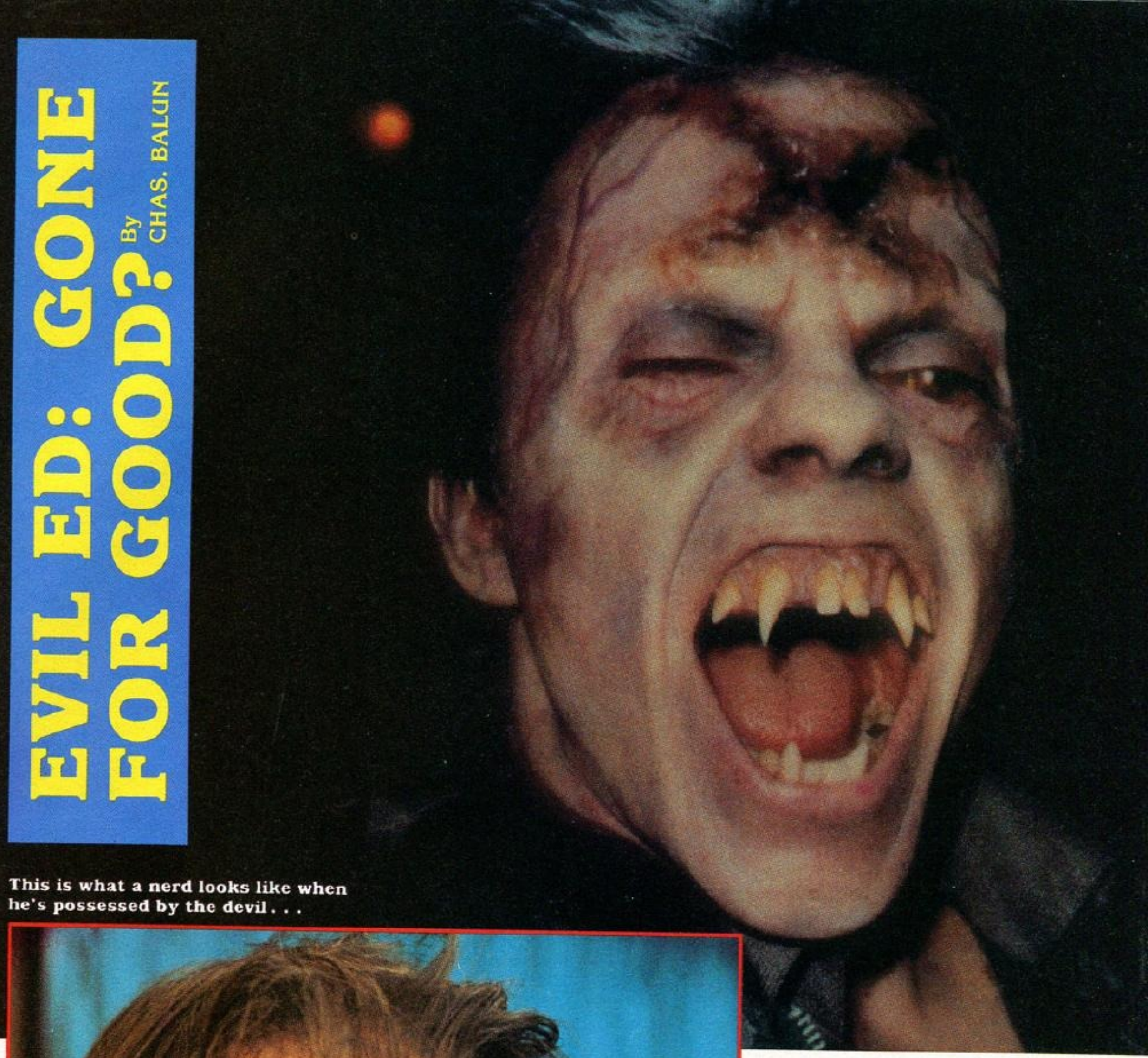
"I had to come up with my own interpretation of the Blob . . . it's like a giant, inside-out vampire stomach."

"There are several stages to the guy's death. He first starts out blotchy, as if diseased, then his face starts to extend and distend and come apart, and he starts to get bruised. When the head goes out the window, he's just a face sliding on the surface of the Blob. We have a vinyl skin for it, and there's a mechanical structure that goes inside the skin. And his little eyes roll up into his head."

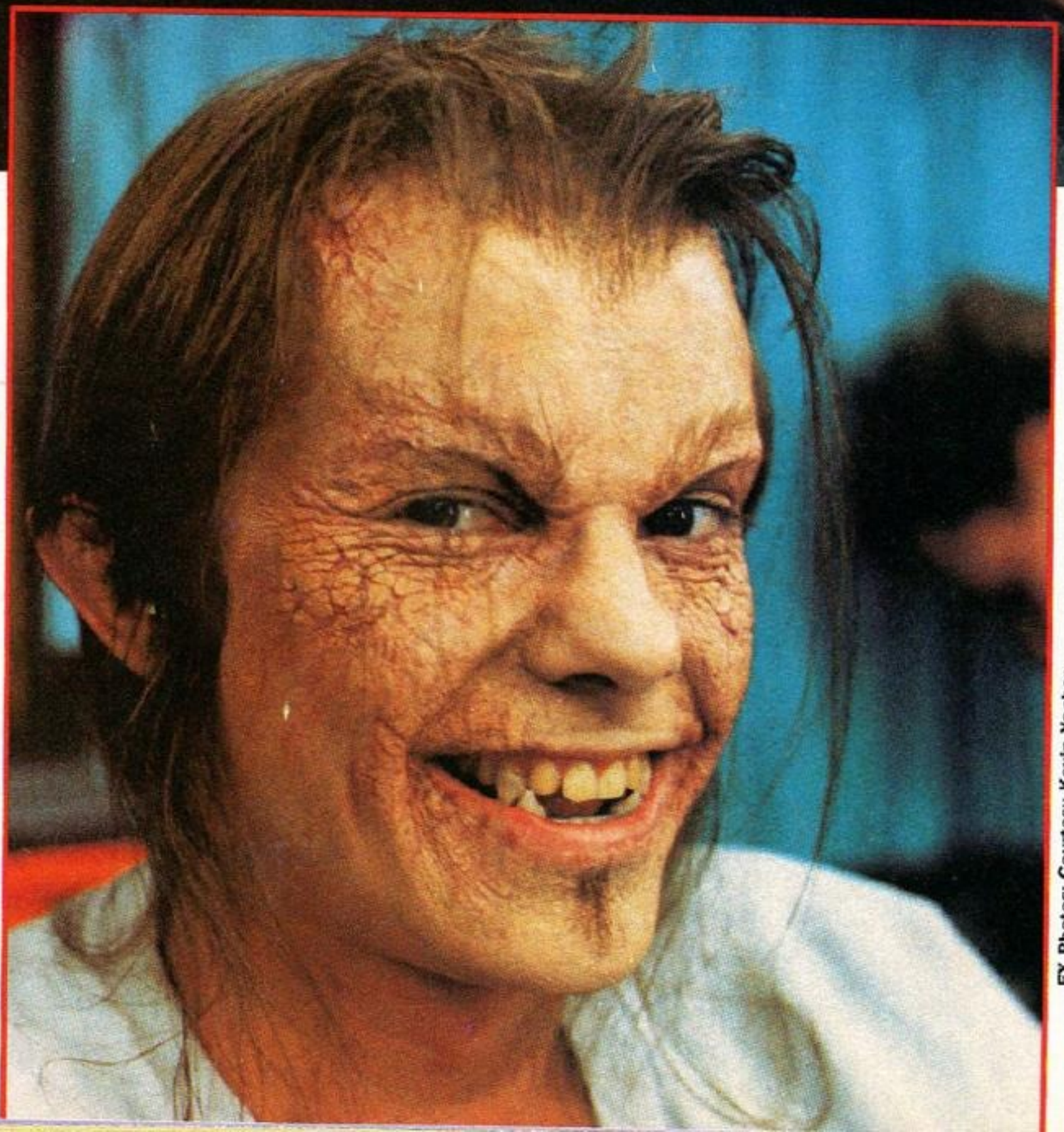
TO BE CONTINUED

EVIL EDDIE: GONE FOR GOOD?

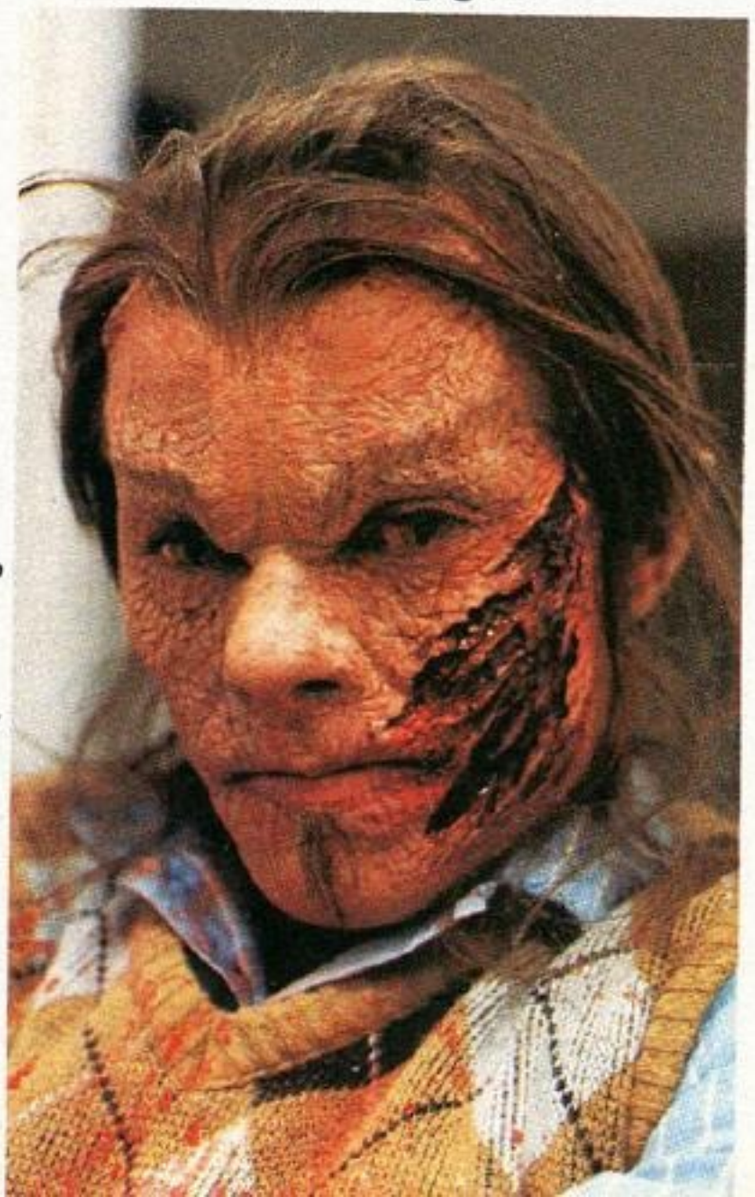
By CHAS. BALUN



This is what a nerd looks like when he's possessed by the devil . . .



. . . and this is what a possessed nerd looks like after you shoot him in the face with a zip gun.



FX Photos: Courtesy Kevin Yagher

Stephen Geoffreys, the man who chortled his way into horror history with "Fright Night" and now "976-EVIL," won't rest on his laurels.

Picture Chris Sarandon's chic, ultra-cool, mysterious vampire character in *Fright Night* raking his three-inch demon nails across the longest blackboard you could ever imagine. Feel it deeply. Let it wash over you. Now, hold that thought. Yow! That hurts, eh?

Just getting you ready for *that* laugh. You know, the one that launched a 1,000 jeers. Forget the vampire talons scraping slate, how about a maniacal, amplified hiccuping goat's bleat of a fractured cackle pumped through 10,000-watt, six-track Dolby speakers, sending shivers up your butt? It's "Evil Ed" Thompson, the really weird high school kid in *Fright Night* who turns into one of the most obnoxious bloodsucking teenaged terrors ever seen (or heard). You're familiar with the type we're talking about; you've seen 'em in dozens of generic teen-kill splatter flicks. These are the guys you want killed the quickest, preferably in the most painful method available.

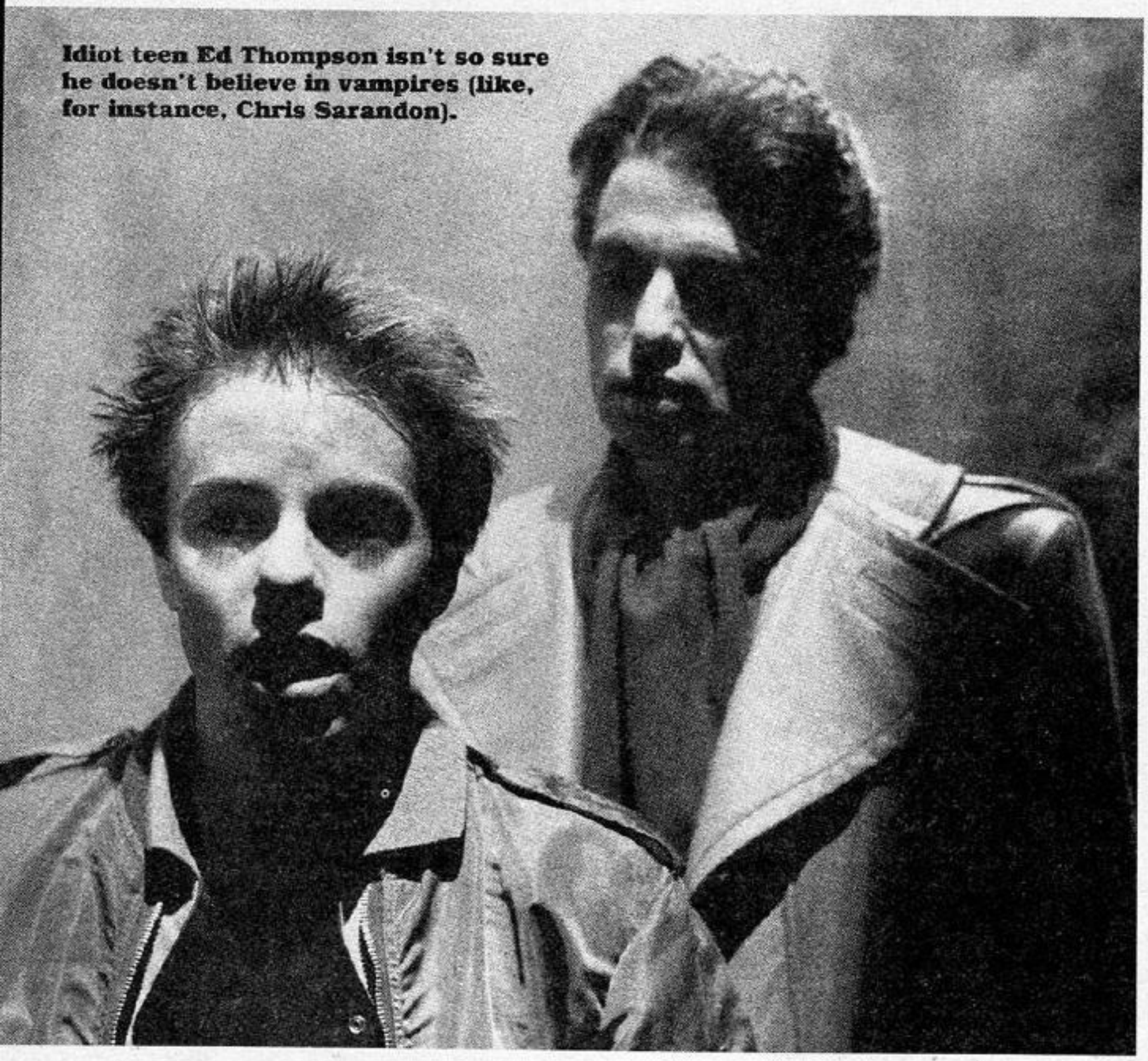
"Hoax revenges himself on people you want him to, almost to the Grand Guignol level."

Now, while this reporter waits in production manager Rick Blumenthal's office on the set of *976-EVIL*, there's just a hint of that laugh wafting down the halls. It's much softer, a nervous punctuation of sorts, and it belongs to Stephen Geoffreys, a young actor described at one time as "a young Jack Nicholson" by critics Siskel and Ebert, and one actor forever ingrained in Fango memories as perhaps the most, uh . . . "unusual" serum sucker ever.

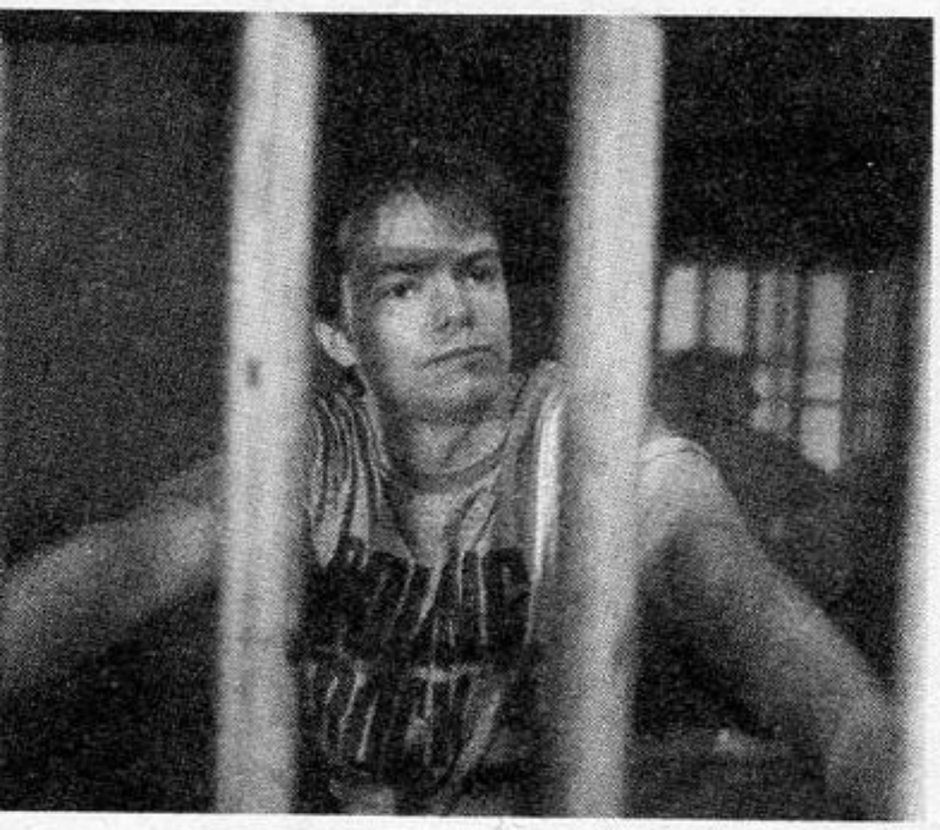
Relax, gang, Geoffreys is *not* "Evil Ed." He's a capable, thoughtful, versatile actor who performed a role that made a lasting impression on plenty of viewers. "I took my family to see *Fright Night*. They know me as I am, so they don't fall for it as much as other people do," he explains. "To them, it's just Steve up there being an actor. People who recognize me react to me in that ex-

"Sorry, Ed, you won't be back for the sequel," mourns Roddy McDowall. (Inset) Evil Ed in his lupine stage.

Fright Photos: Copyright 1985 Columbia



Idiot teen Ed Thompson isn't so sure he doesn't believe in vampires (like, for instance, Chris Sarandon).



***The Chair*, one of the slew of prison flicks this year, finds Geoffreys behind bars.**

act way; they think I'm going to bite them or something. It's funny."

Geoffreys speaks of his past roles in genre films in excited bursts, occasionally interrupted by that funny little laugh. "Horror movies are fun to do. They're exciting; there's never a dull moment. You really have to use your imagination a lot. You just don't put the makeup on and be scary," he says. "You really *have* to believe it. You have to believe this is really happening to you. If you can achieve that reality, it's exciting."

Geoffreys began acting for real at a performing arts high school in Cincinnati before moving to New York and attending acting classes at New York University. Before coming to Fango's attention by way of *Fright Night* and *976-EVIL*, Geoffreys appeared in *At Close Range*, *Fraternity Vacation* and *Heaven Help Us*. He also turned up in a *Twilight Zone* episode, penned by Ray Bradbury, titled "The Elevator" (where he's eaten by a giant spider) and co-starred with the late James Coco in the haunted prison film *The Chair* (Fango #73). He was set to reprise his role as Evil Ed in the forthcoming *Fright Night—Part 2*, but balked early on because of the flimsiness of his character.

"In the script I read, they were just bringing me in there like they felt obliged to bring Evil Ed into a scene, and not for any concrete reason. So I would just be sitting there, laughing like in the first one, for no apparent reason," he discloses. "The part that I read wasn't very strong at all. This one, *976-EVIL*, is much better. I panicked, I was afraid I couldn't get out of *Fright Night 2*."

He complains that this current follow-up is a classic example of sequel fever. "It's *just* a sequel, it's not another movie," he emphasizes. "Since the first one was such a hit, they figure they can make some money off its reputation." Oh, Lordy, the credo of the cash register again resonates through the minds of the studio execs, always hungry for a product to clone, sequelize and continually dismember and redistribute 'til nary a trace of the original remains.

Geoffreys explains the legal wranglings necessary to extricate himself from the sequel: "There is a part in *Fright Night—Part 2*, though he's not called Evil Ed. They hired another actor and changed the name of the character." Hey, just a minute, wasn't Evil Ed on the receiving end of a fatal staking at the climax of *Fright Night*? Well, vampire lore must constantly be amended these days so logic never gets in the way of sequelitis.

"Horror movies are fun to do. They're exciting; there's never a dull moment."

When asked about the attraction that *976-EVIL* held for him, he is quick to point out, "With any play or movie I do, I like to get really excited about what the character has to do in it, what happens to him and his life. My character Hoax Wilmoth goes through so much in such a variety of situations. There's this devil I get hooked up to, who gets into the phone system through this weed that's growing to hell," enthuses Geoffreys.

And, according to the script, his character goes through plenty of those ch-ch-ch-ch-changes. He starts out as a shy, browbeaten, 15-year-old nerdish type who's bullied and belittled constantly by his possessive, cantankerous mother (Sandy Dennis), a fanatically religious nutcake described by scriptwriters as a "cross between Norman Bates' mother and Blanche DuBois." Once Geoffreys' character gets re-energized by the Cloven Hoofed One, he begins to transform (makeup FX by Kevin Yagher) and strikes back at those who've been tormenting him. By fang and claw, Geoffreys rips faces, yanks hearts out, severs hands, launches spider invasions and impales *Teen Beat* pinheads on pitchforks before breaking ol' Mom's neck and allowing her fresh corpse to be devoured by a pack of possessed felines. Everybody else simply goes to hell

in a handbasket—the lucky ones, that is.

Geoffreys is obviously pleased with his choice of film roles and praises director Robert (Freddy K.) Englund. "Having done the three *Nightmare on Elm Street* movies, he knows the style of these films," the actor affirms. "I have a lot of trust in him, and I respect his directing." Geoffreys acknowledges that he especially enjoys working with directors who have been actors themselves, claiming they "have a certain sensitivity; they've *been* there."

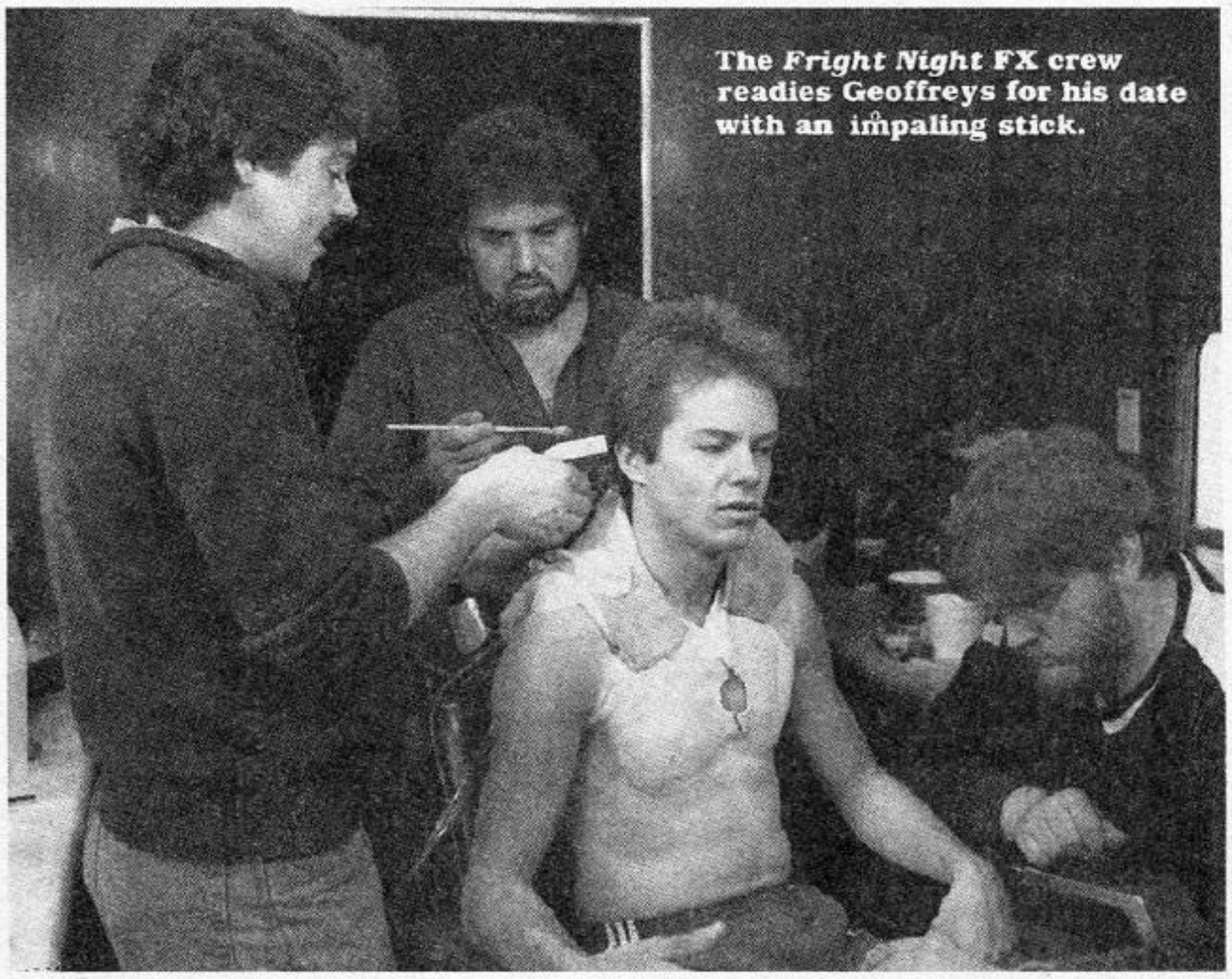
Another fact that emerges during the day's shoot watching Geoffreys prepare for a scene in which he confronts his cousin Spike is that he is a very "physical" actor. He spends minutes limbering up, bending, stretching, shaking his arms and pacing about. He later admits, "As an actor, you've got to use your entire body, to let the people know what's going on. In real life, you don't walk around, pretending there's a camera angle from just your chest up."

As his satanic possession progresses, Geoffreys must wear various latex appliances on his face and emphatically adds, "This makeup is not like a mask. It's very thin, so there's a lot of things I can do with it. In fact, the way it's designed, it adds to the character. It really makes sense, and it doesn't hold me back at all."

He's not held back by director Englund, either, when it comes time to even the score with the people who've been less than Christian with Geoffreys' character in the pre-demon days. Englund nods, "He revenges himself on the people you want him to, almost to the Grand Guignol level. I mean, we get into our gore, into our violence, but there's a logic there. You *want* him to avenge himself, but he just gets out of control."

At the height of his demonic possession, Geoffreys sprouts fangs and talons and gets down and dirty with jokers like Marcus, Airhead and Rags; with noxious nicknames like that, you can be sure they're getting just what they deserve. Of course, ultimately, Hoax must pay the price for his pact with Ol' Scratch. Nothing ever comes easy, and there are no free lunches. And don't worry, he's not laughing now or ever more.

Before he is swallowed up in that black, fiery chasm of the netherworld, Geoffreys has a few last words. "I just love to act; that's all I ever want to do," Geoffreys sighs. "Just keep on doing what I'm doing, whether it's films or plays or musical comedies. Doing films and theater is a great balance." His Tony Award nomination for *The Human Comedy* should help him keep that balance.



The *Fright Night* FX crew readies Geoffreys for his date with an impaling stick.

A few hours later, Geoffreys is back in the makeup trailer, having his third-stage prosthetics touched up by Kevin Yagher's crew, as this reporter prepares to pack it in for the day. Upon leaving the set, one could almost swear he hears an eruption of flushed, convulsive giggling, erupting in staccato bursts of demented glee, echoing down the halls behind him. A quick turn of the head reveals nothing.

He who laughs last, indeed.

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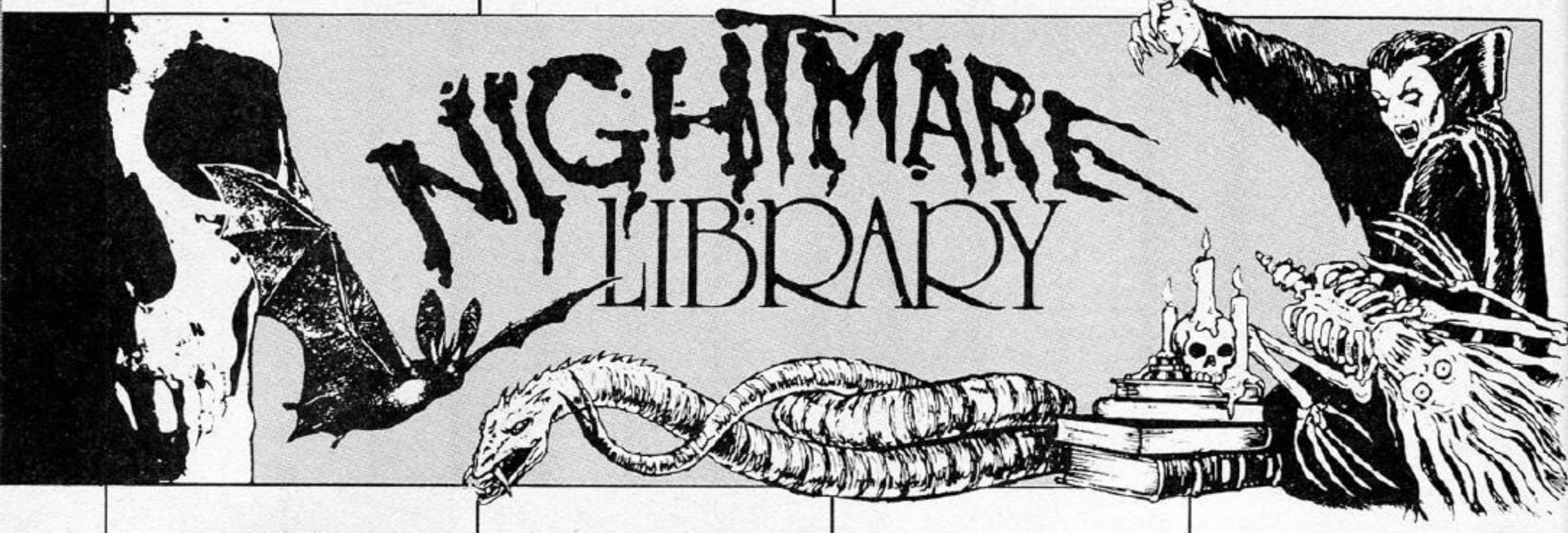


Crooked House
By Thomas F. Monteleone and John DeChancie
Tor Books
346 pp, $3.95

The Winchester Mansion in San Jose, California, so the story goes, was owned by Sarah Winchester, heir to the Winchester rifle fortune. Poor Sarah thought she was haunted by the spirits of those killed by her late husband's weapon, so she built a huge, complex mansion, complete with false passages and doors, to confuse the ghosts.

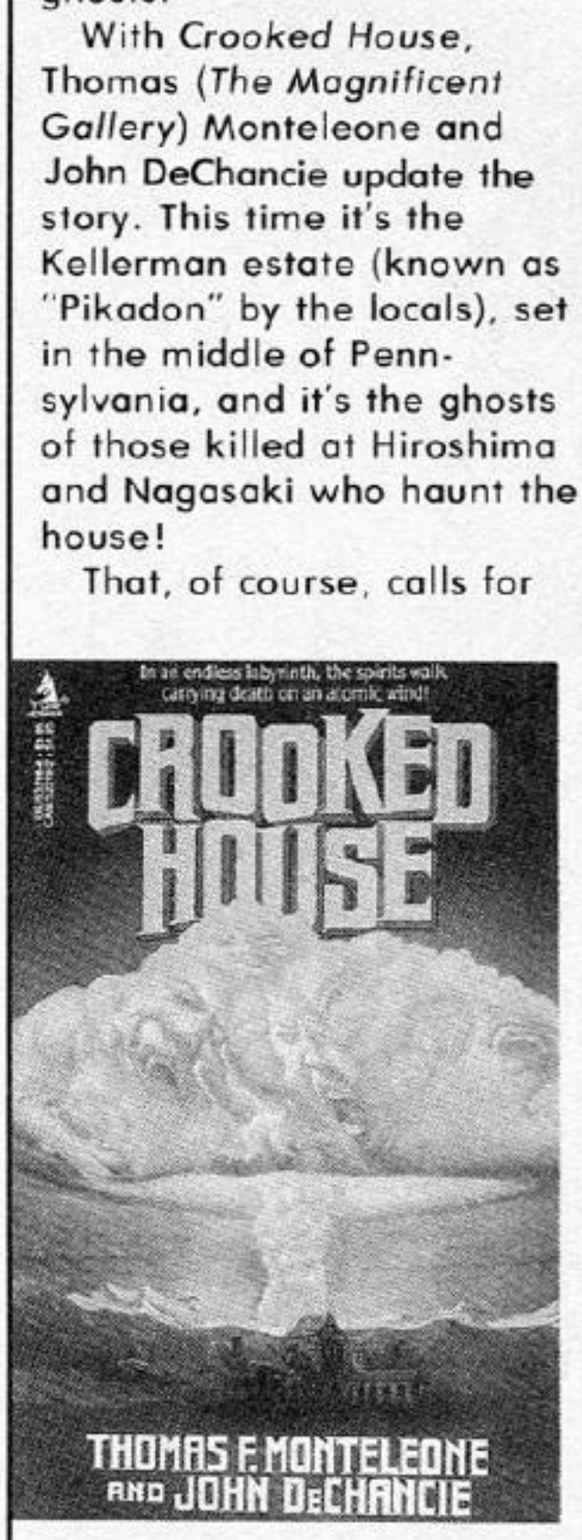
With *Crooked House*, Thomas (*The Magnificent Gallery*) Monteleone and John DeChancie update the story. This time it's the Kellerman estate (known as "Pikadon" by the locals), set in the middle of Pennsylvania, and it's the ghosts of those killed at Hiroshima and Nagasaki who haunt the house!

That, of course, calls for one big bungalow. Enter Alex Wright (no relation to Frank Lloyd), the latest architect commissioned to construct a new wing onto Pikadon. One such wing is added annually. For a while, Alex gets along just fine; the money's great, and a couple of good-looking women hang around the mansion. But Pikadon soon begins to act like a weird drug on Alex. He can't survive without the place.

Whether or not Alex can overcome this inverted homesickness and solve the mystery of the house is the plot pillar that holds *Crooked House* up. And it's not as easy a task as it looks—*Crooked House* could've collapsed under the weight of its extraordinary premise, but Monteleone and DeChancie take it slowly and balance the incredible events with credible characters.

Crooked House is no artistic breakthrough, and it's not destined to be a best-seller. It's just a solid, intelligent little horror novel, something the genre can always use more of.

—*David Kuehls*



Scare Tactics
By John Farris
Tor Books
320 pp, $17.95

John Farris must have two typewriters at home. One sits upstairs in his quiet book-lined study. On it, he taps out such well-crafted novels as *Son of the Endless Night*, *The Uninvited* and *All Heads Turn When the Hunt Goes By*. The other typewriter is downstairs on the kitchen table, right next to a jar of horseradish and a pile of unopened bills, where he pounds out imitation Ludlum or LeCarre "thrillers" such as *Catacombs* and *Shatter*. Simply put, Farris works best as an out-and-out horror novelist. His other stuff pales in comparison.

It's sad to say, then, that for the most part *Scare Tactics* reeks of horseradish. The bulk of the book (187 pages) is taken up by the novel *The Guardians*, a confusing bit of murder, mayhem and political intrigue that's more tedium than terror, sort of an inferior version of *All Heads Turn When the Hunt Goes By* without the horror.

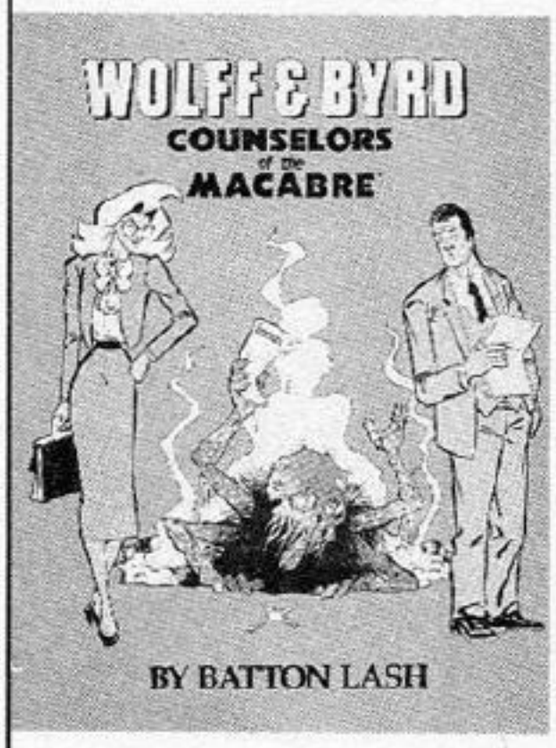
The short story "Horror Show" is even less impressive. This tale of hicks, a psychopath and out-of-body experiences starts out one way, then goes the other, for no apparent reason other than poor craftsmanship.

What saves *Scare Tactics* from being a total waste is the shortest work, "The Odor of Violets." A blend of themes from two recent movies (*D.O.A.* and *Betty Blue*), "The Odor of Violets" (the title's a play on William Faulkner, and that should tell you the author has thought a bit more about this one) shows Farris back in top form. It grabs you on page one with a midnight meeting at a jogging track and slowly pulls you along.

So next time you're at the bookstore, take 20 minutes to read through "The Odor of Violets." Then put *Scare Tactics* back on the shelf.

—*David Kuehls*

Wolff & Byrd Counselors of the Macabre
By Batton Lash
Andrion Books, $7.00



Perhaps you have to be in the legal profession to find the chuckles here. Quite frankly, the majority of the storylines in *Wolf & Byrd Counselors of the Macabre* left me cold. Although Batton Lash is technically a fine comic strip artist and writer, and quite sincere in his efforts, there are two important failings to the concept of this collection as a whole. The Horror, if we can think of the strip as a movie storyboard for the moment, is rated G. On top of that, the Humor in this strip is also rated G. That said, I hasten to add that it's not *Gory*, it's not *Ghastly*, and it sure as hell ain't *Gross*.

Sad to say, *Wolff & Byrd* is completely innocuous stuff,

with a degree of cold chills and creepiness that wouldn't upset Charlie Brown, and a triteness of humor (most of all of it in puns and funny names like "Mort Pulitz, vampire dentist" and "Max Golayth, giant at large") that would make Pogo turn over in his swampy grave.

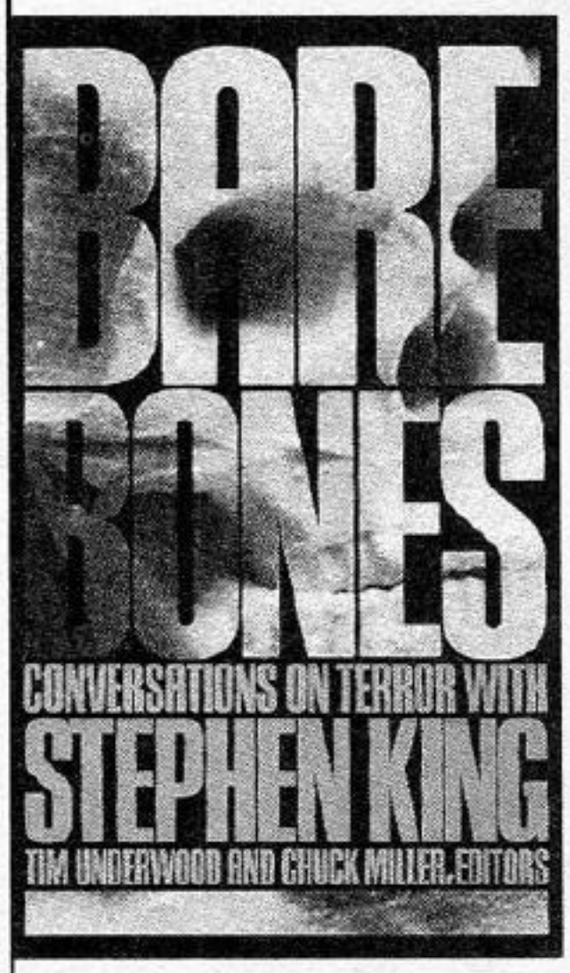
I must admit I'm at a loss to appreciate the audience for whom this comic strip is intended, the *National Law Journal* readership. Lash is obviously aware of the most common conventions in horror and science fiction movies, yet it seems the entire point of his strip is to take legitimate legal precedents and use them in a setting of "What if?" with two lawyers defending monsters and aliens instead of ordinary people. It's damn cute, but after a half dozen cases, the idea wears thin.

I can only assume that the lawyers who read this strip while dutifully perusing their trade journals must find it a delightful change of pace from the more mundane "horrors" of their workaday lives. Even then, you have to *read* the strips closely (and they're reprinted in too tight a format for this without getting a headache from the fine print) to find where any of the humor lies. Unfortunately, Lash doesn't do outlandish things with his visuals, either, so you can't really look for anything memorable there.

There's something about *Wolff & Byrd Counselors of the Macabre* which makes it impossible to recommend. Those who like their horror comic strips to be frightening won't find that EC element here, and those who like their horror comics to be funny—unless you're working in the legal profession—will probably find this strip as hilarious as an episode of *The Smurfs*.

—*Stanley Wiater*

Bare Bones: Conversations on Terror with Stephen King
Edited by Tim Underwood and Chuck Miller
McGraw Hill
211 pp, $16.95



At one point in *Bare Bones*, an exhaustive collection of interviews with Stephen King, the master of the macabre is asked what he thought of the movie version of *The Shining*. King replies that he's getting tired of that question. And you know what? By that stage, the reader is, too.

If you're any type of King devotee at all, *Bare Bones* will be for the most part a rehash of old material. It's *Danse Macabre*, *Stephen King at the Movies*, *Kingdom of Fear* and King's afterword in *Different Seasons* all rolled into one and pressed into Question & Answer format. In the first four chapters, aside from a comment here or there, you've read it all before somewhere else.

So why did this book get published if it's all old material? Stupid question, gang. Just try to get your hands on a copy at the bookstore when it comes out.

To be fair, not all of *Bare Bones* is repetitious, at least not to this critic. I'm a King fan, not a fanatic. Some of you might indeed have read—and memorized—it all before. Chapter five, which includes joint interviews with King and Peter Straub by Fango contributors Stanley Wiater and Roger Anker, is interesting for its byplay between the two horror giants. "I read when I take a piss," says King. "I do too! I do too!" answers Straub. "And when I brush my teeth," adds King.

And in chapters six and seven, the interviewers (in this case reporters from *Penthouse* and *High Times*) actually decide to ask King a question or two that's not about his book or the movies made from them. King's comments on parapsychology, religion, drugs, his American Express commercial and his radio station in Bangor ("Little by little, I've learned they're right about not playing AC/DC in the morning") are as interesting as his best fiction.

You want to know if I recommend the book. Hmmmm. Does it really matter? You, or three people you know, are going to buy it anyway. This is sort of like telling you not to look at an eclipse.

—*David Kuehls*

Stinger
By Roger R. McCammon
Pocket Books
538 pp, $4.95

For all its size, this novel resembles nothing so much as the literary equivalent of an *Outer Limits* episode; it even has an opening chapter that previews a tense scene from later in the book. In fact, *Stinger* in many ways pays homage to those "alien invasion" films and TV shows from the 1950s and '60s. Ideas and images from them are scattered throughout, with a little bit of *ALIENS* and *West Side Story* thrown in for good measure.

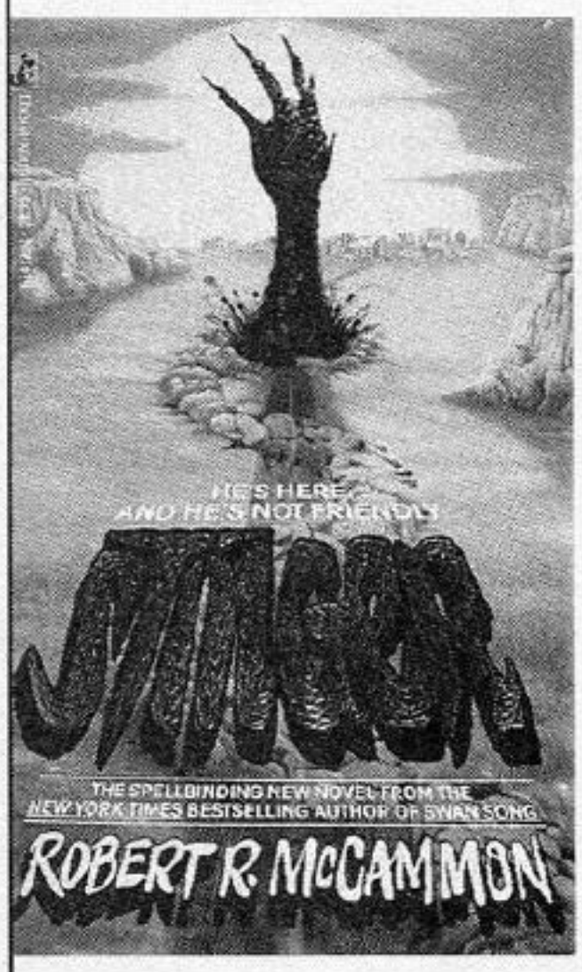
The plot itself is far from original. Stinger is an interplanetary bounty hunter come to Earth in pursuit of another alien who has crashlanded near a small Texas town. The fugitive takes up residence in the body of a small girl, causing her to stare blankly into space and talk like a Conehead ("I desire to o-rate your aur-i-cles"). After Stinger traps the town in a forcefield to prevent his quarry's escape, the townspeople, including two rival street gangs, band together—in the best democratic fashion—to protect their visitor.

McCammon has written some great short fiction in the past and some derivative but entertaining novels. Strangely enough, the early chapters of *Stinger* contain some of his clumsiest writing to date. Here McCammon proves he can lay on the adjectives and mix metaphors with the worst of them. On top of that, we're more than 100 pages into the book before much of anything starts to happen. Although the entire novel is set in one 24-hour period, the setup takes so long and the characterization is so uniformly poor that getting through the book's first third is a real task.

This isn't to say that there isn't a lot of good stuff in *Stinger*—it's just that it takes such a long time to get to it. The later chapters, in which Stinger looses a horde of monsters on the town, are real fun. McCammon's audacity of imagination and sheer visual sense finally shine through here, especially in the novel's climax, when a group of townspeople invade Stinger's ship for a final showdown.

For all its faults—and there are plenty of them—*Stinger* does have its moments. If nothing else, it will fulfill its obligation as a semiquick summer read (no doubt its intention in the first place). But jeez, when it comes to someone with the visual style and storytelling skills of Robert McCammon, is it too much to ask for a little bit more?

—*W.C. Stroby*



PEN AND PEN of Alex Gordon

The Ripper's Legacy

Come October, you will be able to try and guess the identity of Jack the Ripper. Television distributor Harmony Gold and the executive producers of NBC's *Unsolved Mysteries* specials plans to present a two-hour program to be called *The Secret Identity of Jack the Ripper*, inviting audience participation by including a 900 number so viewers can phone in their opinions. Recreating the Ripper's crimes and visiting scenes of his murders will be a prominent part of the show, with so-called experts like former Los Angeles coroner Thomas Noguchi and forensic specialist William G. Eckert (who has probably watched Jack Klugman on *Quincy*) presenting evidence that will hopefully pay off at the conclusion. Various theories will be offered as to who the killer might have been, ranging from one story that he was a demented member of England's royal family to a sailor who committed the crimes while on shore leave. Heidi Wall, vice president of Harmony Gold programming, assures me, "Everybody gets to be a bit of Sherlock Holmes." The program, like the upcoming *Jack the Ripper* network miniseries with Michael Caine, marks the 100th anniversary of Jack the Ripper's activities.

These heinous deeds took place from August 7 to November 10, 1888, and the murderer's victims, all women and almost all prostitutes, numbered at least seven, in the Whitechapel district of London's East End. All but one were killed while approaching potential customers on the street, their throats cut and bodies mutilated in a manner indicating that the killer had quite a knowledge of the human anatomy. He even mailed half of a human kidney to the police in boastful defiance of being discovered, and a series of notes claiming to be from the killer were also received by British authorities. Among attempts by Scotland Yard to trap the killer was the photographing of one of the murdered women's eyes in the mistaken belief that his image might be recorded on the retinas. (Shades of *The Invisible Ray* with Boris Karloff!)

Movie buffs are, of course, way ahead in all this. Even before Allan Barnard edited *The Harlot Killer* in 1953, an anthology of fact and fiction relating to the Ripper case, Belloc Lowndes was renowned for her short story, *The Lodger*, first published in 1911 and later elaborated into a full-length novel in 1913. It deals with a gentle single gentleman who rents a room at Buntin's boarding house. His strange behavior instills terror in his landlady's imagination when the Ripper murders occur, and she suspects her tenant of being the killer.

In 1926, Alfred Hitchcock directed a silent version of *The Lodger* starring British stage matinee idol Ivor Novello. The director considered it to be the first "true Hitchcock" movie and based it on the play, *Who Is He?*, which was adapted from Lowndes' novel. His distributors hated the picture and tried to shelve it, eventually releasing it reluctantly and becoming utterly surprised at the public and critical acclaim. But Hitchcock ended the picture with a twist showing that Novello was not the Ripper. As with Cary Grant in *Suspicion* 16 years later, the director found that he could not present a star like Novello in such a role.

In 1932, producer H. Fowler Mear adapted the novel once more. Miles Mander and Paul Rotha, respected names in the British film industry, did the screenplay. Maurice Elvey directed a cast headed by Ivor Novello, repeating his silent success with Elizabeth (*The Haunted Strangler*) Allan and Jack Hawkins. Critics compared it to the acclaimed *M* (1931) in chills and suspense, but in America it was only briefly shown three years later. Washed out prints remain in some TV and non-theatrical libraries and home video pirates' basements.

Laird Cregar flashes one of his trademark scare stares in *The Lodger*.

All Photos: Courtesy Alex Gordon

***Man in the Attic*'s Constance Smith should know better than to inquire about Jack Palance's facial scars.**

In 1944, 20th Century Fox produced another version of *The Lodger* with Laird Cregar, Merle Oberon and George Sanders, backed by Sir Cedric Hardwicke and a big cast directed by John Brahm from a screenplay by Barre Lyndon. No attempt was made to hide the identity of the Ripper, who was a maniacal killer murdering actresses because they once seduced his younger brother. It was quite unlike the real Ripper, with Merle Oberon as a Parisian coquette, and some critics found it more laughable than horrific, to the chagrin of star Cregar, who attended several public showings in New York and heard the laughter.

The film was, however, a box office success, and led to Fox's follow-up, *Hangover Square*, in 1945. Again scripted by Barre Lyndon and toplining Cregar and George Sanders, this time with Linda Darnell, it was supposedly based on the novel by Patrick Hamilton but bore no resemblance and was not, despite the *New York Times* review, a Jack the Ripper story. It does have similiarities to the Hitchcock movie in that it shows a middle-aged London couple terrified of their boarder because of his stark eccentricity, but Cregar is a concert pianist and Sanders a detective. It was Cregar's last movie; he died at age 28, a victim of excessive dieting.

1954 saw another *Lodger* remake, Fox's *The Man in the Attic*, directed by Hugo Fregonese from a script by Robert Presnell Jr. and Barre Lyndon. Critics panned the film but praised the performance of Jack Palance as the Ripper. Constance Smith, who stabbed her film director lover in real life, played a cancan dancer. Lillian (*The Old Dark House*) Bond cameoed.

In 1959, British producers Robert Baker and Monty Berman delivered another *Jack the Ripper*, a Paramount release with Lee Patterson and Eddie Byrne. It's a minor effort that has the killer crushed to death in an elevator. The 1976 German-lensed *Jack the Ripper*, directed by schlock director Jesse Franco, is best forgotten. Klaus Kinski and Josephine Chaplin are the unfortunate stars. Boris Karloff's TV series *The Veil*, shot two years before his *Thriller* show (which boasted its own adaptation of Robert Bloch's classic "Yours Truly, Jack the Ripper"), featured an episode about the Ripper, and a feature culled from *The Veil* series has been released under the *Jack the Ripper* title on TV and home video.

Herman Cohen's *A Study in Terror* (1966) produced by Henry E. Lester in England, original story and screenplay by Donald and Derek Ford, directed by James Hill, was a considerable improvement. Released by Columbia, the film starred John Neville and Donald Houston as Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson on the trail of the Ripper, with John Fraser, Anthony Quayle, Robert Morley, and Frank Finlay in the all-star cast. Insanity runs rampant in an English lord's family. One of his sons is disowned when he marries a prostitute, whose face is later disfigured. She goes into hiding. The son's brother murders prostitutes in a mad search to find and kill her, too. At the climax, he is confronted by Holmes and the girl's husband, now in a catatonic state. A fierce fire solves most of the problems.

By far the best and most satisfying of the Ripper mysteries is Embassy's 1979 thriller, *Murder by Decree*, again featuring Sherlock Holmes, this time in the person of Christopher Plummer, and Dr. Watson, in the more than capable hands of James Mason, on the trail of the Ripper. Bob (*Deranged*) Clark directed from a screenplay by John Hopkins based on the Jack the Ripper files. The plot is complicated but vastly entertaining. The implications are horrific and the film's mild PG rating a surprise.

The secret brotherhood of Freemasons is heavily involved in the murders—even the Prime Minister of England is a member—and Holmes battles Scotland Yard and the Ministry in his quest. A sprawling pageant of London's Whitechapel district, a strange psychic, an asylum and a member of the royal family are all involved, and *Murder by Decree* is strongly recommended.

Completists may also want to take a look at Darren McGavin's battle with the Ripper on *Kolchak: The Night Stalker*, David Warner's magnificent turn as a time-traveling Ripper in *Time After Time*, and *Jack's Back* (GOREZONE #3), this year's modern Ripper addition.

David Hemmings makes the equally fatal mistake of trying to read the Ripper his rights in Bob Clark's *Murder by Decree*.

FANGORIA BACK ISSUES

Check out these pulse-

1: The first Tom Savini interview; Chris Lee; Godzilla; *Prophecy*. $20.

2: *Phantasm; Nosferatu; Frankenstein;* Matheson; Bloch. $4.

3: Cronenberg on *The Brood;* King & *The Shining; Kolchak: The Night Stalker;* Dracula & Frankenstein; Matheson; director Jack Arnold. $4.

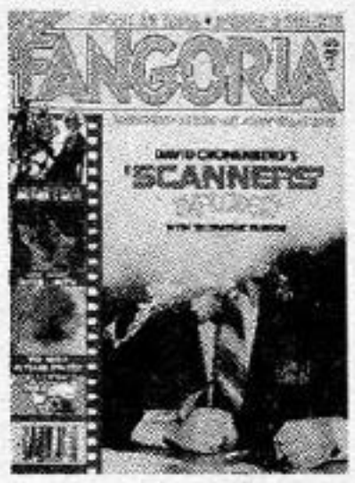
4: *Salem's Lot;* H.G. Lewis; Caroline Munro; Don Siegel; *ALIEN; King Kong*. $6.

5: Carpenter's *The Fog; Village of the Damned; Them!;* Bert I. Gordon; Apes. $15.

6: Bottin & Savini shock FX; King & Romero team-up; *Friday the 13th;* Sean Cunningham; Vincent Price; *Quatermass;* Hammer history. $4.

7: Munro & Savini on *Maniac;* Chris Walas; *The Shining; Curse of Frankenstein;* Price; Hitchcock. $4.

8: Carpenter; *Zombie* gore; Danforth & Allen; *Horror of Dracula;* AIP monsters. $4.



10: Available again! The rarest issue! Cronenberg on *Scanners; Mother's Day;* Plus Carpenter, Craven, Cunningham, Coscarelli & *The Outer Limits*. A limited supply! $15.

11: Bottin & *The Howling; My Bloody Valentine;* Hooper's *Funhouse*; *Scanners*; Sangster; writer Charles Griffith on Corman; *Omen III*. $4.

13: Landis on *American Werewolf;* Romero talks; *Wolfen;* P.J. Soles; Carl Fullerton/*F13—Part 2* FX; Charles L. Grant; Ramsey Campbell. $6.

14: Baker & *American Werewolf*; Carpenter & *Halloween 2;* Savini, Burman, Winston, Walas & Harryhausen FX; Jenny Agutter. $6.

15: Jamie Lee Curtis; *Halloween 2;* Craven's *Swamp Thing;* Burman; Harryhausen; Hitchcock; *Rocky Horror* sequel; Siskel & Ebert on horror ratings. $4.

16: *Basket Case;* Dick Smith; Chris Tucker FX; Straub & *Ghost Story;* Baker FX; Harryhausen; Adrienne Barbeau. $4.

17: Craven; Smith & *Ghost Story* FX; Sexy Fiona & gory H.G. Lewis; Alan Ormsby's *Cat People; Halloween II; Dark Shadows*. $4.

19: *The Road Warrior;* Cronenberg, Carpenter & Landis meet; Greg Cannom; *Poltergeist;* Dick Miller! $4.

20: Joe Dante talks; Paul Bartel; Carpenter on *The Thing;* more with Landis & Cronenberg; Savini, King & *Creepshow; American Werewolf* star. *Craig Reardon*. $20.

21: Reardon & *Poltergeist;* Bottin & *The Thing; F13—Pt. 3;* Zacherle; Cannom FX; more with Carpenter, Landis & Cronenberg. $4.

22: Romero & *Creepshow; Halloween III; F13—Pt. 3* FX; Tor Johnson; Elvira; Ingrid Pitt. $4.

23: Hooper on *Poltergeist & Texas Chainsaw; Evil Dead; Halloween III* FX; *Incubus*. $4.

24: *Poltergeist* ILM FX; *Q; XTRO; The Sender; Bloodfarmers;* Klaus Kinski. $4.

25: Cronenberg on *Videodrome;* Savini after *Creepshow; Alone in the Dark;* Whitley Streiber & *The Hunger; Poltergeist* FX; Darren McGavin on *Kolchak*. $4.

26: Smith & *The Hunger;* H.G. Lewis; FX of Caglione, Munns, Beswick; Michael (*Mark of the Devil*) Armstrong; Ted (*Corpse Grinders*) Mikels; Ed French FX. $4.

27: Savini book excerpt; Tony Perkins; *Evil Dead* FX; Peter Walker slasher movies; Bradbury on horror. $4.

28: *Psycho II*; FX of Smith, Fullerton & Buechler; *Dead Zone,* AIP days; Veronica Carlson. $4.

29: Cronenberg on *Dead Zone;* George (*Mad Max*) & Dick Miller; *Twilight Zone* movie; H.G. Lewis; Lucio Fulci; *American Werewolf; Dead of Night*. $4.

30: Joe Dante speaks; Reardon *Twilight Zone* monster FX; *Cujo*; Carpenter; Freddie Francis; Vincent Price; James Herbert. $4.

31: *Dead Zone; Amityville 3D* FX; *Exorcist* mechanical FX; *Pieces;* Matheson. $4.

32: Carpenter's *Christine;* Scorsese on Cronenberg; *Cujo* FX; Subotsky; John (*Living Dead*) Russo; *C.H.U.D.*; Herbert; Stan Winston. $4.

33: Maley's *Keep* monster; *Splatter; Strange Invaders* FX; Italian zombies; Ed French FX. $4.

34: The early Rick Baker; *Chainsaw's* Ed Neal; *Mutant (Night Shadows)*; Argento; Berryman on *Hills Have Eyes 2*; Reardon & *Dreamscape; Firestarter*. $4.

35: Cannom/Shostrom/Lazzarini rock video makeup; King interview; *Children of the Corn*; Baker; Argento; *Firestarter* burnings. $4.

36: Savini and *F13—Final Chapter* FX; King; Baker; *Ghostbusters*; Karloff; *Firestarter*; Hammer's Roy Ward Baker. $4.

37: Dante on *Gremlins*; Dick Miller; Baker's best; Gene Simmons; John Amplas; *Hills Have Eyes 2*; Mark Shostrom FX; Suart Freeborn. $4.

38: Dante; Walas *Gremlins* FX; Craven speaks; *F13* retrospective; *The Mutilator* gore; Freeborn; *Splatter University*; Jonathan (*LSOH*) Haze. $4.

39: The Shape vs. Leatherface & Jason; *Gremlins* FX; *Ghostbusters*; "V" FX; Freeborn; *Dreamscape*. $4.

40: *Nightmare on Elm St.; Return of the Living Dead; Night of Comet*; Schwarzenegger on *Terminator*; Hammer vamps; Michael McDowell. $4.

41: Jim Cameron on *Terminator;* Chris Lee; *Ghostbusters* FX; *Darkside; C.H.U.D.* FX; *Creature;* Larry Buchanan. $4.

42: *Blood Simple;* King & Straub; Tucker's *Company of Wolves* FX; Mario Bava story; De Palma on *Body Double;* Chris Lee 2; Buechler. $4.

43: *Day of the Dead* set visit; King & Straub; *Cat's Eye & Silver Bullet*; John (*Brides of Blood*) Ashley; Rambaldi FX; Bava story 2. $4.

BACK ISSUES BACK ISSUES BACK ISSUES

pounding, blood dripping, incredibly informative and educationally enlightening back issues.

44: *F13—A New Beginning*; creating Freddy Krueger; O'Bannon on *Return of the Living Dead*; *Company of Wolves*; Siodmak story; Jonathan Frid; John Saxon. $4.

45: *Elm Street's* Heather Langenkamp; *F13—Part 5* FX writer; Dean R. Koontz. $4.

46: Hooper on *Lifeforce*; *Day of the Dead's* Bub; *Night of the Living Dead* book excerpt; *Re-Animator* gore; Caroline Munro; zombies! $4.

47: *Day of the Dead* FX with Savini; *Fright Night*; *Lifeforce* FX; *Neon Maniacs*; Weaver retrospective with giant snails. $4.

48: King revisited; more *Fright Night* FX; Romero; *Supernatural's* zombies; *Silver Bullet* werewolves; ultimate *Day of the Dead* pix. $4.

49: Argento's *Creepers*; more *Silver Bullet & Howling II* werewolves; *Toxic Avenger*; *Nightmare on Elm St. 2*; *Fright Night's* Chris Sarandon & FX; Bloch. $4.

50 Special 50th issue! *Elm Street* sequel; *Re-Animator's* bloody pix; Timpone interviews Angelo (*Freaks*) Rossitto; Savini as the Ripper. $4.

51: Steve Miner on *House*; *Darkside* FX; *Critters*; *Psycho III*; *Living Dead* FX; mutants and aliens; Clive Barker; Craven; Mary Woronov. $4.

52: John Carradine; *Demons*; Tony Perkins on *Psycho III*; Dennis Etchison; Savini in Fango video; *F/X's* skeleton crew; *Elm Street 2's* FX. $4.

53: *The Hitcher's* hell highway; *Underworld* FX; the other *April Fool's Day*; Jack Harris on *The Blob*; Romero's *Living Dead* remembered; Jason poster. $4.

54: *Poltergeist II*; *Maximum Overdrive*; *Creeps*; Ramsey Campbell; John Agar; *Critters* FX; Empire screenwriter; Freddie Francis. $4.

55: *Fly* set preview; *ALIENS*; *From Beyond*—first pix; *Psycho III*; Hooper on *Invaders from Mars & Chainsaw 2*; Buechler; Barker; Bates & Beswicke. $4.

56: *From Beyond* set visit; King on *Maximum Overdrive*; *Vamp*; Chris Lee; Savini on *Chainsaw 2*; *ALIENS*; Winston; Craven's *Deadly Friend*; Cronenberg on *The Fly*. $4.

57: Cronenberg's *The Fly*; *Texas Chainsaw 2*

58: Chris Walas & the FX of *The Fly*; writing *Chainsaw 2*; David Lynch's *Blue Velvet*; Ken Foree on *Dawn & From Beyond*; Robert Englund on being Freddy; Stephen King retires! $4.

59: Stuart Gordon on *From Beyond*; *Darkside* preview; Thom Mathews (a.k.a. Tommy Jarvis) of *Jason Lives*; *Demons* FX; *Trick or Treat*; David Carradine; *Fly* poster. $4.

60: *The Exorcist* remembered with Dick Smith, Linda Blair, William Blatty and others interviewed: Scream Queens Barbara (*Re-Animator*) Crampton. Linda (*Terminator*) Hamilton and Krysty (*Deadly Friend*) Swanson. Plus new *Little Shop of Horrors*. $4.

61: Exclusive *Rawhead Rex* preview; Dick Smith, teacher; Jeffrey Combs on *Re-Animator & From Beyond*; Sam Arkoff recalls his AIP days & Michael Carreras relives Hammer; Dick Miller update; more *Fly* stuff and Leatherface poster! $4.

62: *Nightmare on Elm St. 3*; *Evil Dead II*; special *Friday the 13th* salute; more Arkoff; the zombies march in *The Dead Next Door*; new Jason poster. $4.

63: The unrated joys of *Evil Dead II*; the lovely Nancy of *Nightmare 3*; Alan Parker on *Angel Heart*; Italian zombies; the fall of Hammer. $4.

64: Robert Englund's "Making *Nightmare 3*"; Raimi on *Evil Dead 2*; *NOTLD* remake; *From Beyond* FX; Savini as The Creep; Skipp & Spector. $4.

65: *Lost Boys & Predator* previews; *Nightmare 3* hero; Freddy poster; *Hellraiser* exclusive; Bruce ("Ash") Campbell; Romero protege. $4.

66: Special makeup FX issue, with Kevin (*Nightmare 3*) Yagher, Rob Bottin on *RoboCop*, *Hellraiser's* Bob Keen and Greg Cannom's *Lost Boys*; the unseen Argento (rare pix!); *The Monster Squad*. $4

67: *Hellraiser*; *Lost Boys* hero; *Evil Dead II* FX; Cushing talks; *Street Trash* gore; Larry Cohen; *The Believers*; John (*Fury*) Farris. $6.

68: Jason actors, pt. 1; Rick Baker; slasher beach party; *The Hidden*; *The Unholy*; *Lost Boys* poster; Cohen 2; *Vengeance, The Demon*. $4.

69: Jason actors 2 & Jason poster; Carpenter's *Prince of Darkness*; *Brain Damage*; *Linnea Quigley*; Stan Winston's *Vengeance*; *Running Man*. $5.

70: *Werewolf*; *Vengeance, The Demon* FX; *F-13—The Series*; Gunnar ("Leatherface") Hansen tells all; *Living Dead II*; Anne Rice. $5.

71: *NOTLD* salute with REAL color pix! Uncle Bob on *Brain Damage*; Craven's *Serpent & the Rainbow*; *Dark Tower*; *Chainsaw Hookers*. $5.

72: Censored *Brain Damage* scenes; *Poltergeist III*; *Bad Dreams*; *NOTLD* cast remembers; *Maniac Cop*; *Howling* trilogy. $5.

73: *Dead Heat*; scream queen Jennifer Rubin; Englund's *976-EVIL*; '50s monsters remembered; *The Seventh Sign*; literary horrors. $5.

74: Exclusive *Friday the 13th, Part VII* interviews; the making of *Beetlejuice*; Will there be a *Re-Animator* sequel?; Hammer's Anthony Hinds; Michael (*ALIENS*) Biehn; *Critters 2*; Bob Keen. $5.

75: On set with *Phantasm II* and *Monkey Shines*; Making *Friday the 13th, Part VII*; Traci Lords is *Not of this Earth*; *Ghost Town*; *Hellbound: Hellraiser II*; *Child's Play*; Hammer days. $5.

76: Summer sequel spectacular: *Hellraiser II*, *Phantasm II*, *Fright Night 2* and *Nightmare on Elm Street 4*; Return of *The Blob*; *Twins*; Steve Johnson FX; George Romero interview; Fango convention. $5.

77: On set with *Nightmare on Elm Street 4*; Special Makeup FX issue: Tom Savini, the FX of *Fright Night 2* and *The Blob*; *Elvira, Mistress of the Dark*; *Halloween IV*; *The Host*. $5.

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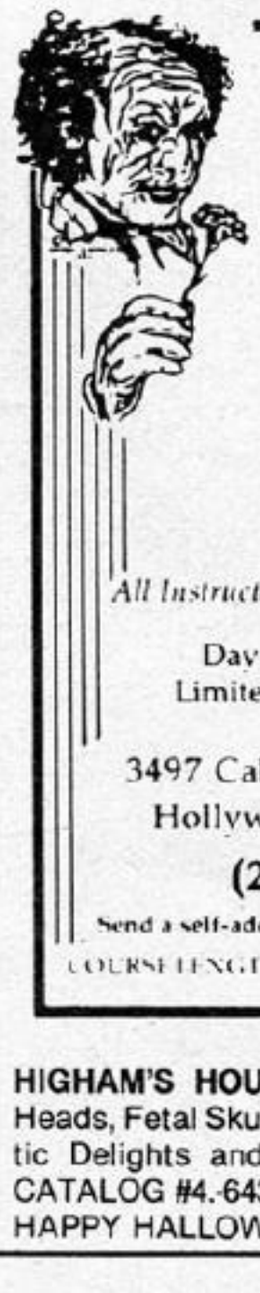

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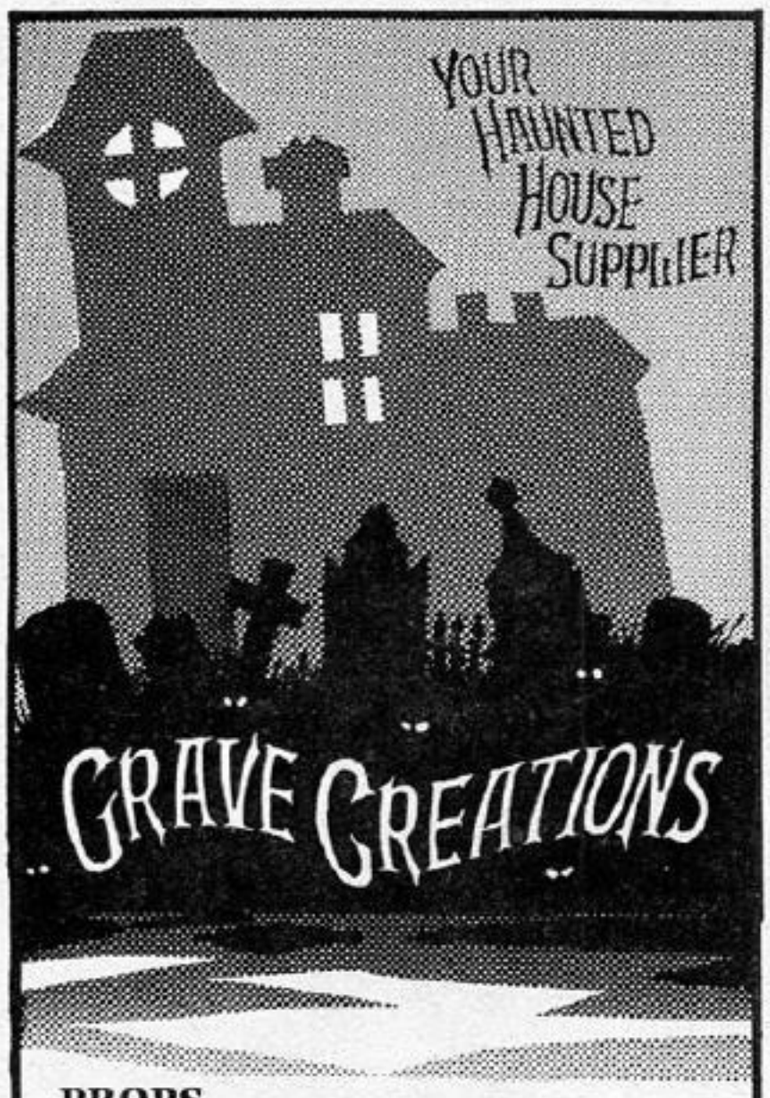

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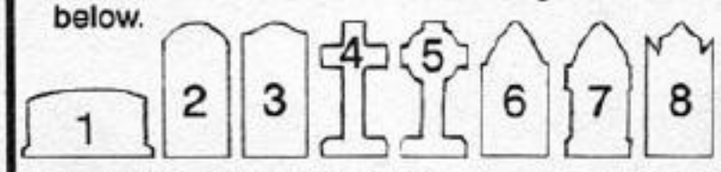

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The Ergstack monster from *Roller Blade Warriors*. As you can probably tell, it eats virgins.

JACKSON

(continued from page 18)

helped him get started. Tobe Hooper, Ken Wiederhorn and Alan Ormsby are among those he mentions frequently. He also has his own unusual set of favorite films and influences. "Fred Olen Ray is fast and has been very inspirational to me. I like Russell Mulcahy, who did *Razorback* and *Highlander*, and George Pan Cosmatos, who did *Cobra*. *Cobra* is one of the most underrated movies in years."

Jackson has no set style as a cameraman, he admits. "It's just whatever I feel at the time. It's easy, because I don't have to argue with the cameraman, since I photograph and direct it myself. I consider myself a filmmaker as opposd to a director or cinematographer; I'll probably do the editing on this, too. My role model was a guy named Bill Dear from Michigan, whose latest movie was *Harry and the Hendersons*. Dear came out of shooting commercials, where he was both director and cameraman. He made a motorcycle movie back in 1976 that I would sure love to see again, called *Northville Cemetery Massacre*."

Jackson wants to continue in the action and science fiction genres and echoes the earliest of all genre filmmakers, George Melies, when he reveals that he wants to astonish his audience. "What I am trying to do are combinations of elements that nobody has really done," he concludes. "It's like with *Roller Blade*: I didn't want to compete with anyone, I didn't want to make another low-budget horror movie, another science-fiction film. I wanted to make a subject that would have to be judged on its own. You go to the video store, and *Roller Blade*'s the only futuristic rollerskating rebel nun movie. And now this movie is the only *sequel* to a futuristic rollerskating rebel nun movie."

And no one else can make that claim.

SAVINI

(continued from page 43)

more and more and more. So you have to show them something, but you can also tease a bit. It's almost like making love to the audience. You tease them a little bit, and then you give them a full blast. And then that blast becomes more powerful.

I do believe that the less you show, the more impact it has. Don't get me wrong, I'll still have to show stuff, but what I'll show will help the audience identify and feel more. Like using point-of-view stuff.

For example, let's say you're hit in the face, fall backward and land on the floor. Now, how would that feel to the audience? A lot of directors would have a fist coming right at you, like the camera's getting hit. That's good, but there's another thing that happens, too: A light flashes in the brain on impact. And perhaps you could show, for a microsecond, how the brain reacted to the impact on the chin. You could have a flash, and then have the camera tilt suddenly sideways, and have the person hit the floor in an *upright* position. Not a *down* position, because to the person being hit, and to the audience, the impression is going to be that the floor came *up* and hit them, instead of them falling to the floor.

Fang: There's a line by one of those hard-boiled writers to that effect, where the carpet comes up and hits this guy in the face.

Savini: Really? That's interesting, because I had this personal experience that's exactly the same. I got off a couch, and I fell to the floor. But the feeling was that the floor came up and hit me.

So that's my goal, to make the audience feel a little more of that kind of stuff. That's what I'm going to try, at least. Obviously, as a first-time director, I want to do things that are unique, because the unique things are the things that stick around. I'm very excited about directing, as you can tell.

Fang: Do you have a favorite scene from a *Darkside* episode that might illustrate what you hope to do in films?

Savini: In "Inside the Closet," there's a scene where Lizzie, the thing in the closet, gets on the back of the girl's head and snaps her head back, and the girl *flies* through the air—*boom!* I did that in slow motion.

Now, there were many ways to have done that, but I think my way was very powerful and scary. You know what I'm saying? It wasn't gory, but it had balls. It had *balls*! That's an important word; you have to have balls today.

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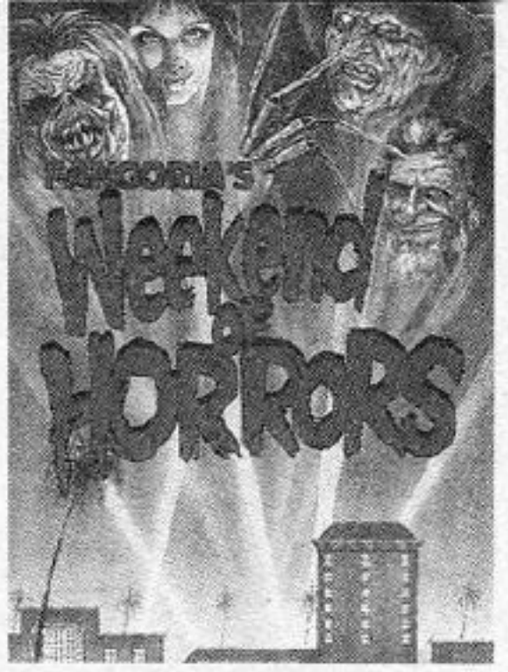

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CONTRIBUTORS' CRYPT

Look for **Chas. Balun** at FantaCo's Megashow con in Albany (Sept. 10 & 11). **Larry Barsky** visited the set of *Night Life*, a new zombie flick. **Peter Bloch-Hansen** covers *Twins* next ish. **Doug Brod** serves as *Video Review*'s assistant managing editor. **Michael Gingold** cameos in *Toxic Avenger Part 2*. **David Kuehls** wonders what happened to *The Dead Next Door*. **W.C. Stroby** writes for Bruce's hometown paper, the *Asbury Park Press*. **Mark Shapiro** makes sure that wife Nancy wears her Fango T-shirt. **Bill Warren** dropped by the *Warlock* set. **Stanley Wiater** is writing *Screams, Dreams and Speculations*, a collector's guide to all genre reference books. *Death Rattle* will publish some **John Wooley**-penned comics this fall.

THINGS TO COME

Oh boy! Summer's finally over, and not a minute too soon. If you had to spend one more day frolicking at the beach or sleeping till noon or just plain enjoying life, you'd have gone crazy, huh? Well, you'd best prepare for academics, so make sure you get ahold of the newest Fango.

Kicking off on a fine literary note, we've got an in-depth update on our premier man of letters, **Clive Barker**. Find out what he's been doing, how he feels about **Hellbound: Hellraiser II**, what's the deal with his latest novel **Cabal: The Nightbreed**, how his new directorial project is shaping up, and so forth. Pay close attention; you won't find this info anywhere else.

As though that weren't amazing enough, we've got a set visit that'll knock your socks off. **Twins**, the new mindbender from **David Cronenberg**, opens this month. What has the New Flesh cooked up for us since **The Fly**?

And hey, there's always room for a little new talent. Check out **Waxwork**, the gory feature debut of director **Anthony Hickox**.

This year you can be ready for any academic surprise—if you've read **FANGORIA #78!**

ON SALE: SEPTEMBER 13

NIGHTMARE 4—

(continued from page 39)

Photo: Rory Flynn/Copyright 1988 New Line

The Elm Street kids' final revenge strands the gloved one on *Gilligan's Island*. "Skippppperrr!"

stage and the rest of the crew breaks for dinner. Englund returns to his trailer to begin the four-hour transformation into the familiar scar-faced, razor-fingered Freddy Krueger for some nighttime close-up inserts.

With time on his hands, Englund has a chance to reflect on the role that has brought him, in a space of four years, from relative obscurity to stardom.

"Occasionally, I get a bit defensive about the Freddy character because people who don't know better are quick to lump him in with all the other horror killers," frowns an exasperated Englund. "And I know I'm the common denominator in the *Nightmare* films, which is why I don't get real upset when people give Freddy the credit. Freddy is me and, to a very large extent, Wes Craven."

Englund points out that, after all this flight time, getting into Freddy's character is more "automatic pilot" than anyone can imagine. "I don't do a lot of prepping to play Freddy anymore," he reveals. "Freddy's literally like putting on a shoe. I'll sit down in the makeup chair, and just the act of the makeup going on my face will start the juices going."

Observers might get the impression that Englund's juices are slowing to a few droplets. "I don't believe the character is being spread too thin," responds the actor as he wriggles in his chair. "As long as storylines and new nightmares can be created that are consistent with Freddy's cruelty, I think the films should continue. But I definitely don't believe there should be a film a year, which is a pattern we've gotten into. Personally, I believe *The Dream Master* may be the time to put the *Nightmare* series on hold for a couple of years."

One overriding reason why Englund is thinking in terms of an Elm Street hiatus is his involvement in the *Freddy's Nightmares* TV series. "It's something I'll be *very* involved in," he grins. "I'll be doing a voice-over intro each week as Freddy, I'll be directing some episodes and will act in some episodes as Robert Englund. I'll be in at least four of the first 12 episodes as Freddy, but you'll never know which episodes or to what extent. In one episode, Freddy might come through a door, say one line and that will be it; in another episode, he might be on screen every minute. The show will also be progressive. A story started in one episode might go on for four episodes before it's finished.

"We're also looking for Freddy to have some character help him out in the episodes he's not in," Englund goes on. "Personally, I'd like to see sort of a death rock chick whom Freddy enlists to help him. The series looks to be a lock for 22 episodes, and it will probably go 44."

Given Englund's expected two-year leave of absence from Elm Street, one has to wonder how the actor will react to his self-imposed exile from this main facet of the nightmare world.

"I'm sure I'll miss it for a while," he admits. "There's a definite mental preparation that goes into getting ready for a *Nightmare* film. Freddy's been good to me, and I've been good for Freddy. Hopefully, the series will take up the slack until another picture is made."

Englund excuses himself for a quick bite of dinner and, for the next few hours, goes basically incognito as the various layers of horror's worst nightmare. But he does emerge, just prior to returning to the soundstage, to address the question of whether *A Nightmare on Elm Street 4: The Dream Master* is an appropriate place to end the series if there were never to be a Part 5. Without giving away much in the way of plot particulars, Englund says yes.

"There is a sort of completeness, a release at the end of this movie that could be considered an absolution and a finish," he nods. "We have a scene where the camera goes right down Freddy's throat and into his guts and soul. It's taken four movies, but we finally get inside Freddy to see what he's made of."

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